

A N
APOLOGY
FOR THE
NON-CONFORMISTS,

SHEWING

Their Reasons, both for their not Conforming,
and for their Preaching PUBLICLY, though forbidden by LAW.

WITH AN

Answer to Dr. *Stillington's* Sermon, and his Defence of
It. So much as concerneth the Non-Conformists

PREACHING.

By John Troughton, Minister of the Gospel.

Gal. 5. v. 15. *But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.*

L O N D O N,

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three Crowns in *Cheap-side*, 1681.

THE EPISTLE TO THE READER.

Good Reader,

THE first part of this Discourse was written last Summer, occasioned by Dr. Stillingfleet's Sermon: but so many Answerers to it came forth, and there was so much discourse of his Reply long before it appeared, that it was laid aside, till We might know what further strength the Dr. had to bring into the field, which when I had considered, I found no reason to alter any thing considerable of what was writ before, but only to add something in answer to a few things suggested in the Drs. second Book, which therefore I have made a second Part. I must beg pardon for some Repetitions, especially in the Historical Parts, the Drs. Discourse inforcing me to them. I do not meddle with the many Questions about Church Government and Ceremonies, which the Dr. and his other Opponents have started; my design is only to shew the most plain, and the most generally prevailing Reasons of the Non-Conformists for their practice in dissenting from the Liturgy, and in exercising their Ministry though ejected, and this I do because the Dr. hath endeavoured to represent Us, especially in the latter of these, as acting against

The Epistle to the Reader.

our own Principles and Consciences, as if we knew it was Schism, but dare not tell the People so. Therefore I have plainly given our Sense of things, and shall leave it to the Judgment of the Readers. What the Dr. hath said against our practice I have considered, being unconcerned with all the rest; and if He please at any time hereafter to give us his Arguments directly to this Question, which he first proposed, viz. Whether the Non-Conformists Preaching to their own People, when forcibly cast out; or to other People that call them in this time of Confusion and Oppression of the Church be Schisme or Sinful? I say if He shall give us his Arguments, which He may do in a few sheets, they shall be examined with as much impartiality and Candour, as He shall please to write them. In the mean time our Adversaries may here see we have some Reason for what We do, and our Friends may see that we do not own the Principles of Separation and Confusion.

Farewel,

Part. I.

Part First.

C H A P. I.

Of the Nature and end of a Church, with the several sorts of Churches.

THat we may the more distinctly set forth the Persons and causes of our Dissent and Separation from them, who appropriate to themselves the name of the Church of *England*, as well as its revenues and preferments, it will be needfull by way of preparative, briefly to consider, what is the nature and end of the Church? what the several sorts of Churches be? what Communion we must have with them? and what Separation from them is Lawfull or Unlawfull?

First, Then for the nature and end of the Church, *It is a sacred Society, or Common-Wealth, whereof Jesus Christ is the Head, King and Governour, united unto him first, and then to each other, for these two great ends, viz to Glorifie God in him, and that they may be saved from sin and Satan, and at last glorified with him.* I call it a sacred Common-Wealth to distinguish it from all other assemblies, civil, or military, or natural, which may, and often are signified by the Hebrew, Greek and Latin Names of a Church. The Church is a Society or Common-Wealth, *i. e.* ordered and consisting of governour and governed, not an accidentall, confused Congregation of men: Christ is the head, King and Governour of this Society; hence it is called his body, and his fullness; as a *People* be to their *King*, Eph. 1. 24. *His Kingdome, his People, yea his House and Temple*, Eph. 2. 21. 22. And he is also cal'd the *Head* of the Church, or *King, Prince, Lawgiver, Lord, &c.* As Union is the bond of all society, so the Church also is an united policy: the Union of societies is voluntary consent and agreement among themselves; but

whereas men in civil societies may first unite among themselves, and then chuse a common Head or Governour, and unite with him; this society is made up of singular Members, of whom each one singly and for himself, doth first unite with Christ, his Head and Governour, by agreement and consent, and then secondly doth joyn with all those that have, or shall subject themselves to the same Governour: order is good for ends, and orderly societies do combine for proper ends, to be attain'd by such combination; and as those ends are good or bad, so is that Corporation of men to be adjudged good or evil. The Church is United for sacred and holy ends, and therefore it is a sacred Common-wealth; the proper ends which this combination of Christ and his Church respect are, that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, *viz* immediately and directly in acknowledging him, worshipping and honouring him, seeking his Love, favour and blessing, &c. In these ways and by those means which he the head and Lawgiver shall prescribe: natural and civil societies if combined for honest ends, are for the Glory of God, remotely in lower things, but the Church is immediately concerned in glorifying him, and that not as a Creatour only but as a Redeemer also by Jesus Christ; and as the end of all good society is the good of the community, and of every person in it, (as far as can be attained; and not of one part only; so the Church is united to Christ, and every Member to the Church; for their own spiritual good immediately and directly, *viz* that they may be every one everlastingly happy in serving and enjoying him, which must be brought about by recovering them out of the misery that they are in by sin, which is their Salvation, and putting them into the possession of the Kingdom of Heaven, which will be their Glorification: civil and natural societies are for civil and natural good and advantage; but the Church is a spiritual Common-Wealth, for spiritual ends only; hence it hath its name in the New Testament *ἐκκλησία*, *a company of men called out for some special end*, called whence? out of this world; not out of the place presently, but out of the concerns and designs of this world; *they are not of this World, as I am not of this world*; John 17. 16. And to whom are they called? to Jesus Christ as their Head and King. to serve *him* and be subject to *him*, and that not in managing the business and interest of this world, but in obeying and honouring him immediately in order to the world to come, leaving the management of worldly things to other societies, or combinations of men under other Governours and other Laws;

Laws ; The Kingdom of Christ is not of this World, *i. e.* as Mediatour and Head of the Church ; *this Kingdom cometh not with observation, but is within us, Luke 17. 20, 21.* Hence it follows, that Christ doth not, cannot delegate this Power to any other, neither in whole, nor in part ; and who shall presume without his appointment to usurp *h*s dominion ? he call's the Church to *himself* immediately, and not to *men*, and *they* give *themselves* immediately to *him* and not to *deputies*, *they first gave themselves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God ; 2 Cor. 8. ver. 5.* And as Christ is the only Head of the Church, so *he only* gives Laws to it, whereby it shall be governed, and by his Spirit procureth and maintaineth love, and obedience to *himself*, and to *his Laws*. It followeth also that all other Governments and *their Laws*, with the designs and ends of them, are extrinsecal to the Church, *as such*, and must not intermeddle in the spiritual peculiar ends and government thereof : they may joyn their persons to the Church, by giving up themselves to Christ, the King thereof, for the Spiritual ends of *his* Kingdom, but they may not mix, or interweave the interest and ends of *their* Kingdoms or governments, with those of Christs in *his* Church ; for so it would become a Kingdom of *this world*, and the concerns of this world would greatly hinder, if not swallow up those of the World to come, which the Church is designed for. Moreover the Church consists of Members called indifferently out of all Nations, Kindreds, Sexes, Ages, diversities of worldly interests, through the succession of all Generations from the beginning to the end of the World, whereof one part is in Heaven already, the Church of the first born which are written in Heaven, *Heb. 12. 23.* (for they yet wait for the coming up of their Brethren, till when, they do not receive the compleat benefit of their association, and union to Christ, and each other) the other part is yet on Earth pursuing the same general design of *their* Common-Wealth, the Glory of their King and their own Happiness ; yea among these, some are yet Infants and Children, capable only of the immediate influence government, and protection of their Heavenly King without being able to do any thing for themselves ; and others there are yet unborn, who, though they are not actuall Members of this society, yet are known to the King of it, and their names contained in his Role, and he will not reckon his Kingdom compleat, or the ends of it accomplished, till these also are brought into it, even to the last man : (*John 10. 16.*) what then are the Intrests and designs of this

world? or the Princes of this world? or the Laws, Methods and Instruments by which they pursue those designs, to this Kingdom of Christ? *they* are diverse in every age; *this* is one throughout all ages *they* are contrary to; and do subvert each other, and one succeeds another; *this* is one uniform, most consistent government; *they* are temporary but for the present, for the short lives of Governours, or for the uncertain continuance of their Families, and then they pass to others, perhaps their enemies; but *the dominion of Christ is an everlasting dominion, and his Kingdom an everlasting Kingdom*; Dan. 2. 24.

Thus we have the true definition of the Church of Christ, which is but one in Heaven and Earth, dispersed throughout all Countreys, and Ages, from the beginning to the end of the world, Ruled by his Laws contained in the Scripture, influenced by his Spirit according to those Laws, and protected by his power against all their enemies: to this we must reduce all Discourses and Notions of a Church, and examine them by it; as by the first truth in that kind, the Rule and standard of the rest.

Wee are next to consider the distributions, or several sorts of Churches.

And First, the Church is distinguished into *Triumphant* and *Militant*, as a whole into integral parts; the *Church Triumphant* is that part of the Church of Christ which is already in Heaven, having got the victory over sin and Satan, yet not fully Triumphant, because it waits for deliverance from Death, or the Redemption of the Body; the *Church Militant* is that other part which is yet on Earth contesting with all her Spiritual Enemies; both these make up the *Catholick Church*, which we profess in the *Creed*, and is immediately subject to Christ, and immediately govern'd by his Word and Spirit, and all the Members of it as Members of this Church are equal, none having authority over others, being all equally and immediately united to Christ, and guided by *him* to the proper ends of this Society.

Secondly, The Church Militant is *Universal* or *Catholick* on earth, *sc.* all the Christian Members of the Catholick Church, that live on Earth, dispersed through all Countreys; mixed with all societies of Civil Government; with whom also are mixed many persons, who profess Christ, but are not really united to him by consent, and real subjection of the heart, and therefore are not living Members of the Church, but accidental accessions to it; as Forreigners that
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live in any state or Common-Wealth, in some general things conformable to their Laws, seem to be Members of *that* Society, but indeed have their Relation and Union to another: Or else this Church is *particular*, as 'tis distributed into several lesser societies, for their convenience and edification; now *these* are not distinct Churches, but distinct Considerations of the Church on Earth, either as collectively considered, as one Company united by the same Bond to Christ the Governour of all, though divided and dispersed in place; or distributively in respect of place only, being divided into several lesser Companies; these also thus considered, have all an equall Relation to Christ, as their Governour; to his Law, as their Rule: to his Spirit, as there Internal Living Guide; and to each other, as Brethren without any authority over each other.

Thirdly, These particular Churches, if they be considered only in respect of place and vicinity, may be, and are by some, distinguished into *National*, viz all the Christians that live in one Nation, or under one constitution, or form of civil government; or *provincial*, viz the Christians that live in one Province or County; or *City Churches*, those that live in one City or *Parish Churches*, viz the Christians that live in a lesser Neighbourhood: yea thts Churches may be distinguished or divided into as many sorts as there be societies of men, any way divided or distinguished from each other: but all these divisions are but accidentall, and extrinsecall differences of the several parts of the same Church, thus divided into diverse lesser parts, which are all equally Churches, and that upon no other account then their Relation to Christ, and to the universal Common-Wealth to which he is Head. From hence we infer 3 things.

1. All particular Churches being but integral, homogenous or equal parts of the Catholick Church, they have all an equal intrinsecal power of forming themselves into Congregations or lesser bodies, for their own spiritual edification, according to the Laws which Christ hath prescribed to that purpose; for being all Brethren, equally and immediately related to Christ, and the division betwixt them being meerly accidental and external, (from the place of their dwelling, or other circumstances,) they must all have an equal right to all the ordinances and priviledges of a Church, and equal authority to dispose of themselves for their own good.

2. That the only end of Christians combining into several lesser societies is, that they may serve Christ together, and help each other

other in their Spiritual concerns ; for they are a spiritual Common-Wealth associated for Spiritual ends only, when they are considered as one body under Christ ; therefore if they divide themselves into lesser bodies, it must be only that they may more easily and conveniently attain the ends of the Whole Body, and generall Association.

3. And that the designs of civil governours, Laws and interest, with the conveniences of civil bodies, greater or smaller, ought to have no influence or concern upon the constitution of these particular Churches ; for if they embody themselves in lesser companies, only to serve Christ, and edify each other with the best advantage to their Souls, then they are still in such incorporating only to respect the honour of Christ, their own edification, and the best execution of Christs Laws among them, leaving other governours to prosecute the ends of *their* Laws and Government, in ways proper to themselves and distinct from theirs ; and therefore if civil Governours model these Churches in subserviency to *their* civil ends, they do really alter the nature of Churches, and take them out of their immediate subordination to Christ, and his Spiritual Government ; or else they make Christ and his Government and Common-Wealth subservient to theirs, and the concerns of Mens Souls, to be not otherways regarded then as they may promote worldly and temporary designs.

But further, that part of the Church which is on earth, being absent from their King and Lord, and in a state of imperfection, hath therefore need of guides and helps, that it may understand the Law of Christ, and yield obedience to it ; though all are equally Members of Christ, yet all are not able to guide and help themselves ; from whence ariseth the necessity of Guides and Governours in the Church ; whence it is called an *Organical Church*, as a body consisting of different organs, for different uses ; thus the Church is made up of governours and governed ; but 'tis still the same Church under the same Head Christ, and his word as its Law ; only the interpretation and application of this Law of Christ, is committed to some for the better edification of all, viz the preserving and perfecting those that are present Members, and the continuing of the Church by bringing in more that shall be saved, Church Governours therefore are in no wise *supream*, Christ being still the immediate head, both of power and influence, both to make Laws and to make them effectual upon the hearts of men ; *they* are appointed only to expound
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and apply Christs Laws for the good of his People, for his Glory only, and to leave both the success and the account to Christ of themselves and of the people.

Hence ariseth a Fourth Division of the Church, in respect of the Government and order of it, into Oecumenical, National, Provincial, Diocesan, Classial, Parochial or Congregational, but all these and each one alike, are taken in a double sense, singularly or collectively; singularly for one individual Church or Body under one Government, whether of one or more persons, and thus the *Oecumenical or Universal Church* on Earth, must be but one great body of Christians associated with the same Governours, for the edification of each other; as *Israel* of old being one Family, multiplied into a People, and these gathered into a great Assembly at Mount *Sinai*, was there framed into one spiritual society, under the Guidance and Government of the Tribe of *Levi*, so that when they were afterwards dispersed over all *Canaan*, they were yet but one polity, and accordingly thrice a year at least, all met to worship God together, to testify their Unity, this the Pope claimeth, viz, that the whole Church is one Congregation committed to him, as the only Pastour or Head of all. In like manner a *National Church* thus singularly understood, is all the Christians of that Nation making up but one Congregation and Polity, all immediately under the same Governour.

Also the *Provincial Church* is all the Christians of one Province: the *Diocesan* of one Diocess, or small circuit; and the *Parochial or Congregational*, the Christians of one small Neighbour-hood, or that without respect of Neighbour-hood, voluntarily gather into one small Assembly under the same Guides or Governours respectively. The Church collectively taken; if *Oecumenical* is the association of all Churches in all Nations under one general Head and Government; the *National Church* is made by the Union of all the Churches of several lesser Divisions, under the general National Officers; the *Diocesan* is all the Churches of a Diocess or smaller circuit, as the *Provincial* is those of a larger circuit, under one Common Head or Bishop. A *Classis* is the same thing with a *Diocess*, saving that by common use the *Diocess* is appropriated to one Head or Bishop, and a *Classis* to those Churches that are govern'd by the common Consent and Councell of the Ministers of the several Congregations. And a *Parochiall or Congregationall Church* is a society of so many Christians, as living in one Neighbour-hood, or in

some convenient nearness may ordinarily meet together for the worship of God and all other offices of a Church.

Here we must observe, that if the Church be taken for one individual Congregation, immediately under the same Governours, then.

1. *The Oecumenical Church was never instituted by Christ*, he never gathered them into one Congregation, as he did *Israel*, nor ever appointed one Governour or Colledge of Governours over them. For seeing the Church was to be called, and gathered out of all Nations, and that successively, some at one time and in one place, and some at another, one Colledge of Governours (much less one single person) could not take charge of it, to teach it or rule it; nor could Christians so dispersed perform the duty of Fellow Members to each other.

2. *Nor did Christ ever constitute a National or Provincial Church*; He never called a Nation or Province at one time to the Profession of his Gospel, nor can one person or society of Governours teach such a body, or administer the Sacraments to them, or know their cases; nor can the people know and help one another, or come to their Governours upon every necessary occasion, especially not in times of persecution, which for the most part hath been the lot of the Christian Church; and should such a thing be necessary our Bondage would be greater, and means of edification much less, then they were to the Jews, who were confin'd to a little countrey, and were an intire people among themselves, and all tyed to each other by the Bonds of nature, as one great Family descending naturally from one man and woman.

3. *Nor did Christ institute Diocesan Churches, viz, that all the Christians in some considerable circuit (less then a Nation or great province,) should be one Congregation, ruled by one or more Governours immediately.* There were no such companies or associations of men called, converted, or formed into Churches, by Christ and his Apostles; but the first Believers were scattered and independent persons, called as God pleased; besides such a flock cannot ordinarily meet together, know and help each other, or repair to their Governours, or be acquainted with them as they ought; nor can the Governours know, teach and feed *them*, and when we have once exceeded the bounds of a regular assembly, to make up one Church of many Towns, of a whole County, or more, we may by the same reason extend it without end, to a whole Province, a whole Nation,

Nation, or Empire; and so make the duties of Pastours and People impossible; and the ends of the Church impossible to be attained, which is contrary to the nature of it.

4. *A Parochial or Congregational Church, is the only Organical Church; directly and immediately appointed by our Lord Jesus Christ.* For thus the Apostles collected the Believers in every City and place where they had preached, into one Church or Society, ordaining them Elders in every Church; *Acts 14. ver. 23.* If these Churches were companies of Believers in several Cities and Towns, as the History in the 13 and 14 Chap. shews, and the Apostles ordained them Elders in every Church, then they did constitute them several Congregations, and no common Governours over them all; nor have we any command to do so, when the Churches should be increased into multitudes of Members. It must be remembered that the whole Church in Heaven and Earth is one Common-wealth, because of it's Union to Christ, and the same general end of that Union; in like manner every particular Church being but a part of the whole, must unite only to attain the special ends of the whole Church, with more ease and convenience, and therefore they must be no more then the same Governours may exercise a true pastoral care over, and as may perform the Offices of Brethren ordinarily to each other; and also may assemble together in one place ordinarily for the worship of God, and their mutual edification. To what purpose is the name of a Church, or Society, to serve Christ together, and edify each other, when the persons are so numerous, or so distant that they cannot possibly perform these offices? such combinations are useless, yea burthens and snares. Even our opposites confess this, *viz.* that the first Churches, and those for 200 years after Christ at least, were but several Congregations, which when the number of Christians were multiplied, they say were called Diocesses; be it so, yet what warrant had they to keep the Christians of one city or place to one Congregation, and one Pastour personall or collective, when the number was so increased, that the ends of that society could not be attained? 'tis the best construction we can make of the proceedings of those antient Churches in this case, that out of desire to keep up the unity of those Congregations which the Apostles planted in great Cities, they still obliged all that were afterwards converted in those Cities, to be Members of the same Congregation, and then the converts in the Villages about; And lastly, all the Christians that were within the civil jurisdiction

of those Cities, whether it was lesser or greater, provinces or whole Countreys, till they made government impossible to themselves, and to the edification of the People, and made way at last for Primates, Patriarks and the Pope, and turned the spiritual government of Christ by his Ministers and Word into a civil government of their own, maintaining what they had gotten by their own Cannons, and the Laws of Princes; and why must we not take warning by them? now if the Churches appointed by Christ are only the Congregations of such Christians that can ordinarily meet together, and with their Pastours, for the proper ends of a Church, it follows that they must judge for themselves, what Congregation, and how large or small is for their own edification; it is their own choice and consent that makes them Members of the Catholick Church, and this Congregation is but a part of that, to prosecute the same ends, therefore it is their business and concern to frame their own society; also these Congregations have the sole right of chusing their own Pastours, admitting their own Members, and altogether of governing themselves; else they have not the power of a Church, but are a company of Christians subject by right or wrong to those that exercise this power over and amongst them; it also follows, that Congregations cannot be justly compelled to combine or unite into larger associations, (as Diocesses, Provinces, Nations, or the like) for the ends of civil governours; for this alters the nature and design of a Church, and is a great dishonour to Christ, that he must not Reign among his people but as men please; but if several Congregations do associate for mutual help and strength, into smaller or greater Congregations (as Classes, Diocesses, Provinces, or even all that are of one Nation) yet they must unite, but as formerly the Cities of *Achajah*, or at present the United Netherlands for great and common cases, and for generall defence, leaving the self preserving and governing power intire to every Congregation, and they also are to be judges, how far 'tis for the good and edification of the Church to enlarge or contract such associations, how long to continue them, and when to break them off; for those associated assemblies govern only by assent, and have not other authority over particular Congregations farther then as they approve of it; we may illustrate this by the civil governments of the world. There was at first but one Family, and but a small one, all mankind was made of one blood, to dwell on all the face of the Earth; *Acts 17. ver. 26.* was there any obligation when they were multiplied, that they should

should still continue in one Family : or was it consistent with the ends of Family Government ? other Families had the same intire authority within themselves, as the first had, and authority to sever themselves from the first, when *that* was too numerous, and *they* a sufficient number to make distinct families : again when families were multiplyed, were they obliged to live all in one Country ? and to continue in one civil society ? what then must have become of all the other parts of the earth, which they were commanded to replenish and possess ; *Gen. 1. 28.* Surely *one* company or a certain number of Families, had full authority to remove and plant Colonies where *they* pleased, as well as another ; yea we see God compelled them to it by confounding their Languages at *Babel* ; and farther, when one colonie removed into another Country, were they bound still to adhere to those they departed from, as a part of their society : if so then all Nations must still have been parts of that society, from which they first descended, and so at length the whole world must have been but one Common-wealth, under one Government, which was impossible and would overthrow all the ends of government ; if then the race of mankind, which are one body in some sence more then the Church is, *viz.* linked by the indissoluble Bond of Nature, (whereas the Church is united by free consent,) I say if *they* having the general gift of the earth and all that is in it to possess, have free liberty and authority to share the world amongst them, to constitute various societies greater or smaller as they please, for the end of civil Life, (provided they wrong not one another, and so hinder the ends of civil government,) why may not the Church, though it is one body, as united to Christ, it being too great to live in one society, multiply it self into so many, as are for it's own edification, and the ends it was made for ? and not be obliged still to adhere as parts, to those first Congregations that were planted in every country, as it were the first Families, till they are a burthen to themselves, till their very society makes them a disorderly confused multitude, and their government degenerates into Anarchy, especially when we have neither command or Scripture example to the contrary ?

By this we may Answer the *Dr's* Question, *viz.* What necessity there is to reduce Churches to several Parishes or Congregations, any more then to reduce Kingdoms to the several Families of which they were at first made up ?

Ans^r. Because Congregations have an original right of governing

ing and preserving *themselves*, even as Families have a natural and unalterable right of government within *themselves*, which *he* that takes from them, makes them slaves and deprives them of their Birth-right; he himself saith upon the dissolution of the Roman Empire, the Nations that before composed it, resumed their ancient rights, and formed themselves into several Kingdoms and Commonwealths, yea and as he would have it into National Churches also; grant this; have Nations such an immutable right to their civil liberties and government, that they may lawfully resume them, when they have opportunity without the guilt of Rebellion? why then may not Parishes resume *their* right of government within themselves, for their own edification, when they have opportunity or necessity calls them to it? also wanting the benefit of protection and government from them that undertake them? why should this be *Schism* in them, more then *Rebellion* in the other? and that self Government is the right of every Parish or Congregation, he confesseth, when he saith that *anciently a Church and Diocess was all one, under one Bishop and a company of Presbyters, for these did officiate in common among the whole people, and when by reason of Multitude they began to divide them into several companies for meeting together at the ordinary times of worship, nevertheless they all met together at the same Sacrament, and all made use of the same Ministers as occasion served, they being not tyed to any one, or any one to them, so that this Diocess was but a great Parish or Congregation, and if the original right of Government were in these, it is so still in our lesser Congregations, and to resume this right is no sinfull separation: nevertheless we deny not, but the Congregations may and ought to unite for their mutual help and defence, especially in times of peace; even as civil states combine for mutual defence and commerce; but then this must be voluntary, and not to impose a yoke on the several Congregations, by taking away their several liberties, or bringing them all to the same Liturgies or Ceremonies, for this is all one as if confederate Nations or States, must therefore oblige each other to the same form of Government, and the same rights and customs of living; and why may not all the Parishes in one County with us, combine for their mutuall help and edification, in certain times of meeting each other, by their Ministers or Delegates, yet every one reserving to themselves the Government of themselves in their own customs and usages, according as they find most meet for themselves? as well as the same County have their*

their Quarter-Sessions for civil Affairs, wherein the Governours and Countrey concerned have a generall meeting, and yet every Town hath its own supreme Officers with severall rites and customs, without any Breach of Peace or Good Neighbour-hood among them?

C H A P. II.

Of Church Communion, and the Nature of Separation.

WE are in the next place to consider, what Communion the Church is obliged to, betwixt the severall parts of it? and what Separation is contrary to that Communion? and what is not?

For the First; The Church is a sacred Common-wealth united to Christ, now the end of every Common-wealth or Polity is common good, that they all promote the good and welfare of that Body, and every Member of it, of which they are parts, viz, that particular good in those particular cases, and things for which they did combine together: this is meant by Communion: for hereby all the actions and designs of that body are common, *i. e.* for the good of all: the Communion then of the Church which is associated only for spiritual ends, consists in this, that *all* design and endeavour the common good and welfare of all Christians in general, and of themselves in particular, in furthering the Salvation of their Souls, the service of Christ, in the use of those helps or means which Christ hath appointed to these ends: this Communion hath diverse degrees and doth exercise it self several ways, according to the several considerations of the Church, and the Relations Christians have to each other, more General or Remote, or more particular and near:

The Communion therefore of the Catholick Church in Heaven and Earth is, that they all hold the same Head Jesus Christ, and own each other as Brethren in him, that they love each other, and all pursue and wait for that universal perfection which they shall all have
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when they are all gathered to Christ at the last day : This Communion cannot be broken without renouncing the Head, and his Religion, and love to each other, which are the Rule and Bonds of this Union ; and therefore there can be no Separation from the Catholick Church but what is not only sinfull but damnable ; as he that renounceth the common bonds of humane society, (justice, love and all moral honesty,) and only pleaseth himself, without regarding the good of any other, he doth hereby break the Communion of mankind, and becomes unfit to live among them : the two great parts of the Catholick Church, that in Heaven and this on Earth, have a Communion, in that they are both United to Christ ; *both* worship and serve him, in those particular ways that are proper for the state they are in ; and *both* wait for that compleat Salvation, which they shall have at their general meeting : besides this, we know of no Communion betwixt them, *viz.* that either part can be serviceable to each other at present, only we that live on earth enjoy the benefit of the Prayers and Examples, which *they* left us *who* are now in Heaven, and of their endeavours to continue the Gospel to us ; and so we succeed them in the same offices, and endeavour to transmit the Knowledge of Christ, his Gospel and Ordinances to those that shall succeed *us*, nor can *here* be any Separation of one of these parts from another, without breaking of Christian Religion, which is impossible to them that are in Heaven, and if any on earth thus separate it is to their own damnation : The Catholick Militant Church on Earth hath a Communion in some more particulars ; for besides their common acknowledgement of Christ, and his Gospel, and the common love they are to bear to all Christians on earth, as their Brethren ; they are to perform all offices of love, which in this their imperfect militant state, they are able and may need from one another ; such as to pray for all, to rejoyce in each others welfare, to sympathize in each others afflictions, to assist by councill, charitable relief, hospitality, &c. and when ever there is occasion, to receive each other to their worship, as brethren, leaving to *every* one the liberty of their particular rites or opinions ; and this is so indispensable a duty, that no Separation can be lawfull or tolerable, in those who separate from the Catholick Church, who relinquish the profession of Christ, or cast of all love to their Brethren, or that will not joyn with them in the worship of God, or concern themselves in their common concerns :

Now for Organized Churches, that are associated for the exercise

cise of their Religion and their edification under Government o Pastours and Guides, *their* Communion must be, that the Members of every such Church joyn with each other ordinarily and peaceably in the same Acts of Worship, and perform all offices of love to each other in some tolerable measure; that they be subject to their Governours, and that their Governours do conscionably endeavour the edification of the people committed to their charge, according to the Laws of Christ which are the general rules of these societies, and according to any other particular rules which they shall agree on amongst themselves, for their own edification, as Circumstances may require; and so that both parts, Governours and Governed do joyntly promote the edification of the whole Body in Holiness and Peace: Separation therefore from these Organized Churches is a Breach of this Political Communion, and Order among themselves; which is done either by breaking off from the Body to which they belonged as Members, (which is Separation properly so called,) or by disturbing the Communion of it, or withdrawing from some parts or acts of that Communion, though they do not wholly break off from the body: such Separation is in many cases Lawfull, in some necessary, and a duty, and therefore must not be Universally Condemned, but the causes of it be inquired into: For though all Christians must be Members of Christ, and of the Catholick Church under him, for the general ends of their Salvation; it doth not appear yet that they must be Members of the same Organized Society, or that they may not upon just occasions leave those societies they were joyned with, and go to others already in being, or constitute new ones for their own edification; even as in civil government, men may not only compose divers Polities or Common-Wealths, but may also make new confederacies, or divide their Polities into lesser, and particular persons may depart from *them* to others, or constitute new ones, yea may deny their concurrence with many things done in the society they joyn with, and all this without the Crime of Sedition or defection, till the causes and ends of such practise prove it so.

Now to descend to the particular forms of Organized Churches: by what hath been said we may easily judge of their Communion, and Separation from them:

And First, For the Oecumenicall Church, the Political Communion *thereof* must be, that all Christians in the World be subject to the same Governours under Christ, and live as Members of the same

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individual society, either as a single Congregation, or as of many united into one : Separation from *this* Communion must therefore be either to interrupt the peace and order of this Communion, or wholly to forbear joyning with them ; but such a Catholick unity of the Church under one Government being impracticable, and inconsistent with the edification of the Church, since it is enlarged and dispersed throughout the world, it is needless to dispute about Communion with it, or Separation from it :

All other Churches that exceed the bounds of a single Congregation, and must be constituted of many, are of the same nature with the Oecumenicall Church, though not of the same latitude, as to the matter of Communion ; which must therefore consist in the performance of all offices mutually betwixt Governours and Governed, as Members of the same society, whether it consists of several Nations, as Patriarchial Churches, or of the people of one Nation, as National Churches, or of the people of one Province, one Diocess, or Classis, as Provincial Diocesan, or Classial Churches : Separation here must be either a disturbing of the peace and order of these Churches, or a withdrawing from them as to the political duties due to them ; such Separation must often be lawfull and warrantable, seeing no command of Christs binds men to particular Provinces or Diocesses, nor always to continue in the same.

Finally, The Communion of a Parish or Congregation consists in this, that Pastours and People mutually perform their respective duties to each other, and amongst themselves for their dayly edification : Separation from such Congregations is either to interrupt their Government or Concord, or to withdraw from them : now seeing no man is immutably bound to one Congregation, nor any Congregation to one Diocess, or any larger combination, and all these Churches are subject to corruptions, which the Members must oppose and contend against, separation from them must not be censured till it be known whether the cause be just or unjust.

And thus we are come at the last to enquire, What are just causes of Separation? whereby we may judge also what are not. And that we may not speak too generally and confusedly, we distinguish betwixt Separation of one Church from another, and of particular Members from that Church whereto they did belong. As all Churches are bound to Communion among themselves, being all Members of the Catholick Church of Christ, though gathered into smaller bodies for their own conveniency ; and this Communion consisteth

eth in acknowledging each other as Brethren, in performing brotherly offices of Love and Kindness, and especially in admitting each other to their worship upon occasions; so Separation betwixt Churches is a Breach of this Communion, when one Church disowneth another to be a Church of Christ, excludes them from her Ordinances, and from all Offices of Christian Love: This is just when 'tis upon great and just causes, (such whereupon we refuse Communion with the Papists and Socinians) if upon lighter causes it is Unlawfull, and a great breach of Charity, yet not to be aggravated as an unpardonable sin, or as that which deserves more animadversion then those sins which destroy all Religion and Humane Society, seeing men may be good Christians in Doctrine and practise, good Subjects and good Neighbours, though they conceived such a mistaken opinion concerning another Church: but this is not the Separation I shall insist on; the causes that make this just, will make the other just also; but all the causes that make Separation from a particular Congregation just, will not, reach our Communion with other Churches, or concern our Separation from them.

We shall therefore enquire, for what causes Members of a Church may Lawfully separate from it, *i. e.* contend for the reformation of the Church, and if they cannot attain it, withdraw from, and either joyn to other Churches, or make new ones themselves? And to clear this point, let us always Remember, that the Church is a Common-Wealth United to Christ as the Head First, and but secondarily to each other; Faith and Obedience to God in Christ, with the Salvation of their own Souls, is the end why men become Christians, and give up themselves to Christ; and next they give up themselves to the Church, as a Society that profess to design the same end, and to have given up themselves to the same Lord, and therefore they hope, and intend by the Friendship of this Church to be assisted and furthered towards the attaining of their great ends; if therefore the Church prove otherwise *i. e.* to be no help but an hindrance to their serving of Christ, and furthering their Salvation, Separation from it, is not contrary to their Obligation as Christians, they are still Members of Christ, yea may and ought to seek another Society, wherein they may attain those great ends; it is true men are bound to bear with many things amiss in a Church, because there will be always some things amiss in one kind or other; and also for publick peace, least by unseasonable reforming some

lesser things amiss, or withdrawing from the Church, while there is any reasonable hope of amendment, they should make things worse; yet when they cannot worship Christ aright, or can have no tolerable edification in the Church, the end of the Church Society is destroyed, and Separation from it become necessary; and the peace of a Church is subordinate to the great end of a Church, *viz.*, that Religion may be preserved and promoted among them; but when this is not intended, but betrayed, peace then is no duty but a conspiracy against Christ, and the good of his Church: Even as in civil Government, the end being the good of the whole Society, so long as that end is tolerably pursued, in the preservation of publick justice and honesty, many things must be born with, rather then to endanger the whole by unseasonable endeavours to mend lesser things; but when the publick good is not minded, or those conditions broken, upon which men did associate, and there is no hope of redress, in this case peace and quietness is to betray the Government: The causes therefore which make Separation Lawfull are, in generall, when men cannot worship Christ aright, in the chief parts of his worship, or edify their own Souls in the Church, whereto they are joyned, and when there is no reasonable hope of the redress of these things.

Particular causes are such as these.

1. *When a Church is idolatrous*: for now it forsakes Christ the Head, for whose sake and service we became Members of the Church, and therefore must now forsake it for him; *what agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols?* 2 Cor. 6. 16. *Ye are the Temple of the Living God, &c.* ver. 17. *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, &c.*

2. *When any known sin is made the condition of Communion*, i. e. *when a man shall not be admitted or continued to be a Member of the Church, unless he approve some error in Doctrine, corruption in worship, or himself commit some sin in practise, or at least consent to it in the Church*: For also this destroys the end of a Church, which is to edify us in Faith and Obedience, whereas here something against Faith or Obedience is to be the very entrance into the Church.

Upon these 2 cases all agree, that Separation is Lawfull and necessary; and they both hold strongly against the Church of Rome: for she is manifestly idolatrous, and imposes both False Doctrines, Superstitious Worship, and wicked practises upon all her Members:

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nor will it serve to say, that ~~that~~ Church denies *her* worship to be idolatrous, or the Terms of her Communion to be sinfull; but she must clearly prove it from Scripture, which is the Law of a Church, and that to the capacity of every Christian concerned: for if there be any reasonable grounds to suspect the Terms imposed to be Unlawfull, a Christian cannot with safe Conscience submit to them till he is satisfied to the contrary; and the Church having no Authority from Christ to impose any doubtfull, much less sinfull Terms of Communion, in this case the Church is guilty of the breach, and not those who refuse to joyn with her, or withdraw from her.

3. *When there is no tolerable means of edification in the Church, though no evil is imposed upon the Members* As when the teachers are Hereticall in the chief points that concern our Salvation; or so contentious, and such railers at any that differ from them, that they cannot be heard with peace and composure. For this cause the Dutch, both Ministers and People, and the then Prince of Orange also forsook their Parishes, because their Arminian Preachers spent so much time railing on the Calvinists, that they could neither hear them with profit, nor bear them with Patience. Also when Ministers are grossly ignorant, and unable to explain the necessary Doctrines of Salvation to the People; or when they do not, or will not ordinarily preach to them, or endeavour their instruction; or when their Lives are greatly contrary to Religion and Godliness; or when the People are almost all corrupt in Doctrines or wicked manners, and will not be reformed. For all these cases are directly contrary to the ends of a Church, and we must rather forsake the Church that we may be edified in Faith and Holyness elsewhere, then foregoe our Edification to keep Peace with the Church.

The Dr hints at general Inconveniences that will follow, if people find Fault with their Governours, and withdraw from them; and to such inconveniences all things in this world are subject, and there ought to be the greater care to prevent them; but must People bear always? still there is nothing left but the name of a Church, and their Communion with that be a hindrance to their Communion with Christ? besides, nothing would more awe both Pastours and People to their duty, then if they knew that the soberest and most carefull Christians of their own Salvation would leave their company, if they would not mend their manners; and this would
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be a more Universal Benefit to the Church, then the inconvenience of now and then one unseasonably withdrawing out of prejudice or finding too much Fault, can do hurt to any Congregation.

4. *When a Church hath neither the exercise nor power of Government.* The Catholick Church is a Society under the Government of Christ by his Spirit, and every particular Church is a part of the Chatholick, gathered into a Politicall Body, that it may edify and preserve it self, which is done by Government and the exercise of Discipline, as well as by preaching the word and administering the Sacraments; and indeed the latter will be as ineffectual without the former, as a Charge at an Assize or Sessions, wherein the Laws are recited, would be, if there were neither *presentment* nor *punishment* of Offenders: A Church without Power of Government is no Church, but a Company of Neighbours that meet sometimes to hear the Word, and receive the Sacraments together, which Members of several Congregations may do: for power of Government is the form of a Church, as of a Civil Polity, by which only it differeth from a confused, accidental conventing or cohabitation of persons: now it is no sin to separate from that which is no Church but a Duty; as much as it is for every one to be a Member of some visible Church: This case is too common with us, where Ministers of Parishes are sometimes Deacons, at least for a while, who have no Ministerial power at all; and if Presbyters, yet such as pretend to no more then to preach and administer the Sacraments; all power of Government, as they say, belonging to the Bishop; and whatever their private Judgment may be of their power of Government; we know, they neither do, nor dare, exercise any solemn admonitions, or suspension from the Sacrament, much less Excommunication or Absolution; when this is the case that the Church hath no power to govern her self, hath long lost it. and is out of hopes to recover it, nothing can oblige men to live Members of it, though there may be reasons why we should hear and receive with them occasionally, as with Brethren: If it be said that the Bishop hath a power of Government over all his Diocess, I answer, this shuts out all the Parish Ministers from Government, and makes *them* but the Bishops Curates, and makes all the Parishes cease to be distinct Churches, and to become one general Church under a Bishop, who is utterly incapable to manage the charge of such a Congregation; be it only to govern and not to preach, as some men would have it; and so it is still destructive
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of the end of a Church, viz. self-edification and preservation; but moreover the Bishop himself is subject to the Metropolitane, and all causes in his Diocese admit of an appeal to the Arch-Bishops Court; so that neither hath the Bishop supream and full power of Governing *his* Church; and therefore neither is the Diocese a Church, but a part of the whole province, all under the Government of the Arch-Bishop alone, the Bishops being but his Deputies; and this still makes the Government more impossible, and Separation more necessary.

5. *A 5th. just cause of Separation is, when men are certainly and constantly debarred of some Principal Ordinances of Christ necessary to their Edification and Communion with Christ.* The end of a Church is the joynt practice of all the Laws and Ordinances of Christ, in their proper seasons. It is possible there may not be occasion for the exercise of some of them (as Church Censures) for a considerable time; and it is possible some Ordinances may be carelessly neglected, or for some reasons, for a time omitted; (as the Lords Supper) This is no cause of withdrawing, at least not properly; but if there be constant Bars put, that any of these Ordinances shall be excluded the Church, (as the Sacraments are with many Sectaries :) or that they shall be made unaccessable by sinfull or unnecessary additions, alterations, interpolations, or any other Corruption; so that the most conscientious Christians cannot Communicate in them, this after a convenient waiting and seeking for redress will justify Separation: for the people may not be contented with one part of the Worship of God, and the means of their Salvation; this is to betray the Gospel and their own Souls: nor have Church Governours power to add any thing, either essential or circumstantial to the Ordinances of Christ, th t may hinder the people from Communicating in them; and if they have no such authority to enjoin such things, there is no obligation upon the people, either to comply with them in obedience, or to bear their usurpation, by continuing in Union with them. If it be pleaded that the *Jews* never separated from their Church, when they could not Communicate in the Sacrifices at the Temple, under Idolatrous Kings, or when the Passover or other Ordinances were wholly neglected or little used: I answer, this is not the case of Christian Churches: the *Jews* were one single, though large Congregation, instituted by *Moses* to continue till Christ should come, who should have power to new moddle the Church, as he should think fit: they were

were all tyed to one Altar, and one Temple, and might Sacrifice no where else; they were also obliged to one Priesthood, the House of *Aaron*, and therefore in what-place-soever they were, they must hold Communion with this people and Priesthood at this Altar; and if publick worship was neglected or corrupted, they could in no case separate, or gather New Congregations, or chuse new Priests, or build new Altars, but must be content with private helps, till things were reformed: but Christians though of one Nation or City, are not obliged to one Congregation indispensably. (for then men may not move to other Parishes,) nor to one place of publick worship, nor to one Minister or company of Ministers; the Christians Church, being tyed to no Countrey, as the *Jews* were; nor to any particular people nor kindred, nor having any promise to be continued to the end, in any one place, or amongst any one people; it hath therefore power to distribute it self into diverse Congregations, and consequently again to withdraw from any one of them, when there is need.

6. *Gross infringement of Christian Liberty*; we are commanded *Gal. 5. 1.* To stand fast in the Liberty with which Christ hath made us free, and not to be intangled again in the Yoke of Bondage; this was Liberty from the Ceremonial Law, which being dissolved by Christ, the Church might suffer no man to impose on them again; consequently the Church was freed from all Rites and Ceremonies, but those which Christ had appointed in his Gospel, and she must maintain this Liberty; now if the Governours of the Church, either by themselves alone, or with one part of the people, will impose Rites and Ceremonies on the Church against the consent of the whole, or part of the People, without shewing sufficient reason for such imposition, or any necessity from present urgent circumstances, for such Rites and Customs; this is a great usurpation, and the people are deprived of the Liberty Christ purchased for them, and bequeathed to them as a singular privilege, and therefore it doth greatly obstruct edification, the end of a Church. Now though every such imposition will not warrant separation presently, yet when they are multiplyed and inforced with Rigour, it overthroweth the Peace of a Church, and so their edification; and also tends to enslave the people to their Rulers, and to open a Door for all the Rites and Ceremonies that Superstition or Tyranny can invent and therefore this is to be timely withstood: enslaving the people, destroyeth the end of Church Government, and therefore frees men from a necessary Obligation to that Government.

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To these causes of Separation, which are the principal and most weighty, we may add, that *when Parishes are grown so populous, that no one place will hold them, to hear the word and receive the Sacraments together, that they cannot know each other generally, much less perform the mutual offices of Fellow Members, they may Lawfully divide themselves into more Congregations*; and if it can be done with general consent, it is most for peace; but if not, men are not bound to hazard their Souls to gratify the Pride of others, who had rather Thousands should perish Eternally for want of the necessary means of Instruction, then their Dominion be lessened. This we see sometimes done by the civil Magistrate, *viz*, large Parishes divided, and if he will not do it when there is need, the want of his concurrence cannot make it a Schism for the people to divide themselves.

These are the most ordinary and obvious causes of Separation from Churches, and which will be most usefull for the ensuing discourse. It is true, *Church Governours* are as unwilling the people should have any liberty without *them*, to provide for the edification of their Souls, as *Secular Powers* are jealous of such a claim in *their* Subjects; and they tell us, as this *Dr* doth, what confusion it leads to, if the people should be judges of their Ministers, Doctrines or Lives, or of the commands of their Governours; if they may in every case, and according to their own fancies withdraw from them; &c. But here they fight with a Shadow; no judicious man ever affirmed that the people may according to their fancies, prejudices, suspicions or light scruples withdraw from their Churches; but what then? must they withdraw in no case? they gave themselves to Christ, and not to their Ministers, any further than as they dispense the Laws and Ordinances of Christ; some inconveniencies will sometimes happen upon just separation, it may be *always*, as there is no publick change in any state, though from worse to better, but it is attended with some inconveniencies for a time, especially to particular persons; but if it be for the lasting good of the whole, those inconveniencies must be over-looked.

It was this Notion of not withdrawing from Churches and Governours, almost upon any account, that suffred so many errors, corruptions, and usurpations to grow upon the antient Church, till at last they were all formed into the body of Popery: for good men in those days complained of multitudes of Ceremonies, pride and ignorance of Church Governours, and such like growing evils;

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but for fear of being accounted Novations or Donatists, and out of an overweaning reverence of the Church, they were afraid to make any effectual opposition against them; and the same notion set's very fair to produce the same effect again: we grant they must be very weighty cases that warrant Separation, and such as do directly and necessarily overthrow the edification of a Church: we grant also that people must wait a convenient time, and use all peaceable means for reformation, with all due respect and reverence of their Governours; but if after all, no reformation can be had, people must not hazard the Salvation of their own Souls, and the honour of Christ, to please men; and the greatest inconvenience that is like to follow upon such Separations is, that it is like to make Church Governours more diligent in feeding the Flock, and more cautious of imposing upon them, and of ruling them with Rigour; it will also make the people more carefull of their praïses, least they often offend their Brethren by their Scandals, and cause them to avoid them for disorderly walking; but what if the people, having great offences and stumbling blocks laid in the way, and great obstructions of their edification, and instead of any Redress have *Rehoboams* Answer, that more Burthens shall be added, or *Pharaohs* Compassion, that it is want of more severity in Laws and Government that makes people cry out for Indulgence and Relaxation? what if in such cases, the people sometimes withdraw from a Church, either in part or wholly, sooner then in strictness they should, or then the wisest men, who can bear longest, would allow? yet if this be really done for the edification of their Souls, that they may enjoy the Ordinances with more profit and peace, and they do not un-church those they withdraw from, or refuse to own them as Brethren, or to hold Brotherly Communion with them on just occasions; certainly this can be accounted but an infirmity incident to the generality of men: for all have not patience or prudence alike, nor do all understand the rules of Government and Societies; yet all serious Christians have so much sense and prudence as to love their own Souls, and to feel when they want Spiritual Food themselves, and to pity and love all their true Christian Brethren; and if God approved the defection of the Ten-Tribes from *Rehoboam*, and forbad him to endeavour to reduce them by violence, though they offended in the manner of their withdrawing; he will not certainly condemn those, who conscientiously withdraw from those Churches where they cannot have edification,

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or Christian Liberty, though they may fail in some circumstances of their withdrawing.

And how *they* will Answer it, who would have *them* reduced by the Sword, and giving them over to the Devil, when in the mean time they will remove none of their stumbling blocks, themselves cast in their way, let *them* seriously consider.

C H A P. III.

The general Reasons of the Non-conformists for their Dissent from the Church of England, ever since the Reformation.

BEfore we come to apply the foregoing Rules concerning Churches, their Communion and Separation, to our particular case; it is convenient to give the World a true Character of Non-conformists, with the grounds of their Non-conformity, that it may be the better judged whether they are guilty of sinful Separation or not? and this I shall do.

First, In general, shewing what were the reasons whereupon all that have gone under the name of Non-conformists since K. *Edw. 6th* Reformation, have dissented from the established way of the Church of *England*.

Secondly, more particularly, what is the case of the present Non-conformists, and the Reasons of their Dissent and Suffering.

Of the First in this Chapter:

When Pious K. *Edw. 6th*, by the advice of the Council and some Bishops, about the Year of our Lord 1549 and 1550, renounced Popery, and instituted a new Liturgy, as a form of publick Prayers, Administration of Sacraments, with other Rites and Ceremonies, as also of ordaining Bishops, Priests and Deacons in and for the Church of *England*, immediately many good and learned men, especially such as had Travelled in *Germany* and *Switzerland* among the First reformed Churches, were dissatisfied with

this Model of reformation as imperfect and short of what the Scriptures required, and most other reformed Churches had attained to, and also as symbolizing too much with *Rome*, in the manner of publick Prayers, in Ceremonies and Church Government: they gladly embraced the good beginnings of reformation, and heartily joyed in the endeavour of cleansing God's House; but they were sorry the work stopped almost in the beginning, and that some out of ignorance of the Truth and too much respect to the Romish Religion in which they were bred, did strive to recede from it as little as might be, with whom others joyned, some for fear of Tumults, thinking they had gone as far as the people at that time would bear; others for reasons of State, being willing to keep the publick Order and Government of the Church, as much as might be, under the command of the Civil Magistrate; and some as it fares in all cases, being *Popish* in Heart, yet seemingly joyned with the Reformers in framing their Liturgy, only that they might undermine and hinder them in making a through reformation.

The number of these who were dissatisfied with the present establishment, dayly increased as the Protestants multiplied; so that in *Q. Mary's* Reign, but seven years after, there was a number of these at *Franckford* only, enough to make up a Congregation, and to have Ministers of their own, and to keep publick Assemblies in a Church allowed them by the Magistrates; who thinking themselves to be now at their own Liberty, laid aside the Liturgy of the Church of *England*, and composed a new short one for themselves, after the manner of other reformed Churches. In the Reign of *Q. Elizabeth*, the Dissenters increased, and were called *Non-conformists* and *Puritans*; and now the Ecclesiastical State began to take notice of them, to remove some of them from their preferments and employments, and to encense the Civil Magistrate against them; nevertheless they increased in number and reverence with the People; the Divinity-Professours of both Universities, and many others eminent for piety and learning were then reckoned *Puritans*, and some suffered as such.

King *James* shewed himself more displeased with them, and resolved to have Rooted them out of the Church; yet in his time 750 Ministers subscribed a Petition to him for reformation of things yet amiss in the Church. In his Sons Reign, the Papists, who were now got to Court, and had both Favour and Power, joyned their interests with the Bishops to Root out these Non-conformists, as these

those that were most contrary to them, seeing they disliked the Bishops and their Liturgy for coming so near to *them*; and how many worthy Ministers and thousands of the best people were driven into Foreign Countries, and those that stayed at home were severely treated for the space of 16 years; and yet like *Israel* in *Egypt*, the more they were oppressed the more they increased. Nor have their numbers been diminished, or their cause disparaged ever since, notwithstanding the great endeavours to cast odium upon the one, and suppress the other. Dr Fuller wittily sums up this History thus, *Non-conformity was conceived and bred in King Edward's Day, it was born at Franckford in the Reign of Q. Mary; under Q. Elizabeth it was in its Child-hood; in K. James's time it grew to be a good tall stripling, and under Charles 1st. it grew to be so strong a man as to unhorse its opposite prelacy, and to get into the Saddle.* thus He and I add, that the turning out of 2000 Non-conformists out of the Ministry and Universities in 1662 was no argument, that this man was past his full Strength, or declining to decrepid age.

Now the reasons of the dissent of so many for several Generations, have been principally these.

Rea. 1. The First taken from their dissatisfactions with, and objections against the Liturgy: they disallow not a Liturgy, or Directory rather, viz, a prescribed order and rule for the exercise of publick worship, in which all might agree, and generally conform to prevent confusion; yea, and to satisfy their Episcopal Brethren, they could be content with a short Liturgy, prescribing the Form of Prayer and Administration of Sacraments, and other publick offices; provided, nothing but an questionable doctrine and duty, and necessary order, might be thrust into it; and Ministers, especially after they come to some years and experience, might be left to use it at their discretion; so that the Liturgy may be a Rule of Concord, a Testimony of the consent and agreement of the Churches, in Doctrine and Worship, and a Guide to young men entering into the Ministry, but not a Snare to any; much less to hinder the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit, which are given to the Ministry on purpose to edify the Church with, *Eph. 4. 11, 12. &c.* And such as these are the Liturgies of most reformed Churches, and to this purpose only. But against our Liturgy they expected.

1. That it obliged all Ministers, without limitation all the days of their lives, to the same form of words, in all publick worship, whether

whether it would suit with the condition of the people, or the circumstances of providence, or not ; also that it was so large as that it did mostly prevent the use of Ministers own Gifts, or made them seem but superfluous additions ; this they conceived to be directly contrary to the institution and office of the Ministry, which was appointed by Christ, and furnished by him with his Spirit, that they might to the worlds end administer all his Ordinances to his Church, *viva voce*, as the Spirit should give every man ability, and particularly fit him for the people he was to take charge of : they are indeed by their office obliged to the Holy Scriptures, the words as well as sense, as being the divinely inspired Law of the Church, which they are to interpret and apply ; but seeing interpretation and application of the Scriptures is their work, and every ordinance doth imply this more or less, they ought not to be tyed generally and strictly to certain forms of words wherein to express themselves, unless they were of divine inspiration ; and if all that Ministers were to say to the people, was prescribed them, as it might be in all, as well as in those things wherein the Liturgy doth prescribe to them, then the Ministry might be a calling as others are, that men might in a common way take up to read all divine service, but certainly there would need no solemn ordination or consecration to this office with Fasting, Prayer and imposition of hands, more then to any other calling.

2. They object against our Liturgy, that the matter of it and words also are generally taken out of the Service Books of *Rome*, viz. the *Mass-book*, & *Ceremoniale*, & *Pontificale Romanum* ; and that the form of it, viz. the manner and order of the service is too much conformed to, yea little different from the Popish Mass or Service : now they say God in the Law refused to be served with any of the Forms, Modes, Ceremonies, Customs, Vessels or Utensils wherewith Idols had been served ; yea though the things were some indifferent Rites and Customs, and which the idolatrous thought founded upon reason and nature, and the vessels were of Materials of *his* own making. It is true, what is Scripture, and from Scripture must be used though it was abused by Papists ; whatsoever is founded upon divine institution comes from the word, not from the Church of *Rome* ; but to keep to their Words, Order, Method, &c. seems too great respect to that Church, and that service : They knew very well, there was no legal pollution upon the Words or Ceremonies, because they had
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been used by the Papists, as there was upon the Idols Utensils under the Law, wherefore they might not be converted to mens private use, but must be destroyed; but to translate their service into our Church in things wherein we have the same liberty of composing forms and methods for our selves, as any others have, this seems too great a respect to that idolatrous Church, from whence they came, too easy a passing by all the Pollutions and Tyranny, with which they had defiled and tormented the Church of Christ; too great an acknowledgement of her, as a worthy or eminent Church, from whom we should take a pattern of our worship; all which were certainly displeasing to God; and by this symbolizing with *Rome* in our worship, we harden the Papists, as if we differed from them but in circumstantial things; we keep in mind there ways and worship, and so continually expose the people to the danger of returning to Popery; and also reflect upon the reformed Churches, chusing *Rome* for our Pattern, keeping so near to *her*, whereas *they* have all utterly cast her off, and composed new forms of worship for themselves, out of the Scripture: nor can there be any other reason given, why *England* above all other reformed Churches, is so much solicited to, and in danger of relapsing into Popery; from age to age, but that her publick service and Church Government is so much like to that of *Rome*, that the Papists think they may easily perswade us to receive *all* the rest, seeing we are so zealous to retain *so much* of their Religion.

3. They thought our Liturgy very defective in the publick Prayers; partly in that there are very few things mentioned in them, and those very generally; either in the confessions of sinners petitions for Mercies, especially Spiritual; and the Letany, which is something more large and particular, (yet comes not near the secret wants of mens Souls,) mentioneth things so briefly, and suddenly passeth over to others of a different nature, that there is no time for mens thoughts to reflect on them, or their Hearts to be affected with them, which is one special end of Prayer; and partly because of the abrupt breaking off, and dividing one Petition from another into several Prayers; most of the Collects containing but one single Petition, or two at most; this breaks off intention and affection: neither is there any order among the Prayers, or coherence of Petitions, and some Petitions are repeated often in the same service; yea some whole Prayers; especially when the Letany is read, there is a very needless repetition of almost all the Prayers;
for

for if that be comprehensive of all necessary things, what need other Prayers be used at that time? these defects *viz* confusedness, incoherence, tautologies in words or sense, going backwards and forwards &c. are objected as intolerable in the Prayers of particular Ministers, who yet may out-grow such weakness and pray with better method, and to better edification; they are not then to be excused in the Church Liturgy, where no man hath power to correct, or alter any thing, and Rulers are very unwilling to yield to amendments, for fear of confessing something to have been amiss before.

4. They were not satisfied with the Responses, that the people should audibly speak after the Minister, or alternately with him; this lesseneth the gravity and seriousness of the Service; hindreth the exercise of Thoughts and Affections in the people; and makes the worship more like a Dramatick Action, (wherein every one acts their part and must wait for their *Q.*, or time of speaking and silence,) rather than like the solemn service of God.

5. They dislike the frequent repetitions of the Lord's Prayer, which in every Morning and Evening service is twice used, and once for every office that is added to them; as when the *Letany* is read or the Communion Service, or a woman Churched, or a Child Baptized, or a Marriage Solemnized, or a Person buried; so that it is not unusual to rehearse the Lords Prayer five or six times before the Liturgy service be finished; and yet the Minister must use it in the Pulpit after all. They could not conceive any reason or excuse to be given for this custome; but a superstitious conceit of that form of words, almost turning them into the Nature of a Charm; as if they could not be used too often, and the very use of them made all other service the more acceptable.

6. The corrupt Translations of the Scripture used in the Liturgy: that there may and ever will be imperfections in, and doubts, about Translation of Scripture, whilst mens Knowledge is imperfect and their Judgments diverse, is granted by all, but the Translations in the Liturgy in the Psalms, Epistles and Gospels are grossly corrupt, some contrary to the sense of the Text, and in some places whole Verses omitted, and the Titles of all Psalms are left out, which in the Hebrew are the first verse of the Psalms, and very necessary for the understanding of them: therefore to oblige men to read these Translations only in the Church Service, even when we have a better, and publickly authorized Translation, they

they judg'd it a matter of no small Offence.

7. The Reading of the Apochryphal Scriptures as parts of the publick worship, and that without any distinction from the Canonical : They accounted it an intolerable thing, that Fables and Fictions should be solemnly Read to the People, with the same Reverence as the Word of God ; and such are many of the Apocryphal Books ; and the rest being only of Humane Authority, the reading of them ought not to be made a Solemn part of Divine Worship. The Conformists say that Reading the Scripture is Preaching, and the Non-conformists say, it is not fit, meer Humane or Fabulous writings should be preached to God's People, when they meet to Worship him by hearing *his* word. -Above all they were offended that a great deal of the Holy Scriptures is left out of the Liturgy, and so never to be Read in the Congregation, and Apocryphal Chapters put in their Room.

8. Holy-days or Festivals in the honour of Saints. They would not deny, but if the Church thought fit, they might observe the days of Our Saviours Nativity, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension and sending the Holy Ghost, as other Protestant Churches do ; provided they might be kept seriously, and not made of the same necessity with the Sabbath ; but when all divine worship of the Creatures is Idolatrous, and the keeping of days in Honour of them, as well as Building Temples to them, was ever reckoned a part of Divine Honour (and to be sure is more Honour then ever God commanded or allowed to any of his Servants,) They knew not how to excuse this practice, that it should be a part of a Churches Liturgy.

9. Nor could they approve the Doctrines of the certain Regeneration of all in Baptism, and that Infants dying after Baptism before the Commission of actual sin, are undoubtedly saved ; which are laid down in the Liturgies, as undoubted Articles of Faith ; whereas there is no Scripture that clearly proveth either of them ; and at best they are points disputed on by Learned men on both sides. Nor could they excuse the practice of refusing Parents to promise for their own Children in Baptism, seeing it is upon *their* Account only, and Gods Covenant with *them*, that the Children are admitted to be Baptized ; and they are thereby engaged to breed them up in Faith and Obedience ; much less that *Strangers* should receive the charge of the Baptized, *who* have no authority over them, *who* neither care what they promise, nor are ever called

led to account, how they perform their promise, for if they should, few would undertake the charge, and so this custom would fall to the ground.

10. They excepted against the Ordination of Deacons to read Divine Service, Baptize and Bury, and to preach with special License; 'this they say was to create a new sort of office in the Church, which Christ never appointed, nor gave his Ministers Authority to appoint it: Deacons were to look after the poor, and that was all their work; and though the Primitive Christians sometimes used them to read the Scriptures in the Congregation, yet they never ordained them to this, as an office; yea though they should be admitted to read Prayers, to Marry or Bury, yet this is no sacred office appointed by Christ, that should constitute a distinct order of Ministers; and if, as grave and prudent persons, they might be admitted to do these offices, either for want of Ministers or to assist them; yet may they by no means be suffered to Baptize, it being as peculiar to the Ministry, as to administer the Lords Supper; and the admission of Members into the Church, as sacred and solemn a work, as to confirm and Build up the Members of it.

These were the principal objections of the Non-conformists against the Liturgy, which were, some of them at least, exemplified and confirmed by many particulars, of lesser moment in themselves, but all tending to make their desire of a Reformation of the Service Book to seem reasonable, and the work necessary.

Rea. 2. The Second thing the Old Non-conformists disliked in the Church of *England* was, the Government of it by Prelates, *i. e.* Bishops, with sole power of Jurisdiction. Many of the Old Non-conformists thought Episcopacy utterly unlawfull, and an usurpation not to be born; but the rest, who looking upon it as a humane constitution (as our Law doth) thought it Lawfull, and that it might be submitted to, did yet dislike *our* Episcopacy; partly because of the secular grandure, power, and employments our Bishops were invested with; which made them unable and unwilling to discharge the office of a Pastour in the Church, partly because the Church hath nothing to do in their election, except an empty shew, and therefore persons were most commonly prefer'd not for true Episcopal Qualifications, but because they could make interest with Superiours, but principally because the Bishops arrogated to themselves

themselves the whole power of governing the Church, and excluded all the Ministers from any share therein, a thing most unexcusable in them, who acknowledge themselves to be of the same order with the Presbyters, and only in a degree of honour above them, and that by the Authority of the Civil Magistrate. Whereas even those that with any probability or sobriety maintain the Divine Right of Episcopacy, do nevertheless acknowledge that he may neither ordain, nor govern without the advice and consent of his Presbyters. This was look'd upon as intollerable, that the power of governing the Church which was committed by Christ to all his Ministers, should be wrested from them generally by a few of their Brethren. And that they who are thought fit to dispense the Word and Sacraments, *the chief keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, whereby men are brought to the Faith, admitted into the Church and built up in it,* should not have power to censure offenders, and to receive the Penitent again to Communion; which are things of lesser moment and depending on the former, and yet without which, the former could not be managed in a fit manner for Edification. By this means Ministers are deprived of one half of their Office and Power; and are both discouraged and hindered in the other half. For who will regard their Preaching, who have not Liberty to judge what persons are fit to be admitted into the Church, or who in it deserves censure, or to be cast out of it. And the Bishops themselves in undertaking the whole work of Governing the Church, took that upon them which they never could, nor did manage for the Churches Edification.

R. 3d. The Non-Conformists, were much dissatisfied about the Discipline of the Church, both in respect of the Rule of it, and the Officers that manage it. The Rule they say is not taken out of the Scripture, which is the only Rule and Law of Christ's Church; but it is the Roman Civil and Canon Law, which at best were suited to their own times, and People, in many things very defective, and in others, erroneous and superstitious.

There were indeed some appointed by K. Edward, to collect a body of good and useful Rules out of the Canon Law, to be the Rule of Discipline for this Church, but he dying that work was never finished, so that the Rule now is the whole Canon-Law, or so much as every Bishop pleaseth to use in his own Diocess. The Bishops made a few Canons of their own 1603. but they are such as only strengthen their own power in imposing and enforcing those things,

which the Non-Conformists had long desired might be amended. As to the Officers that Administer the Discipline, They are Chancellors, and Commissaries and Civilians by Profession ; no Ecclesiastical Officers, yet these Rule over the Ministers of Christ, Admonish, Suspend, Deprive them of their places, and Excommunicate both them and the People when they please. This they have no power to do, nor can the Bishop delegate his power of Governing to them any more, then his power to Preach the Word, and Administer the Sacraments both being parts of the Ministerial Office : This they thought was to change the Constitution of Christs Church at pleasure. They were also offended at the Administration or use of the Discipline, (That being such as the Officers were) because the Church in its Constitution and frame kept so near the Roman model. Therefore the Bishops have ever found it necessary to exercise Church Discipline mostly against those that disliked or dissented from the Liturgy, and Government, and to connive at the loose and prophane, to hold them in some external obedience to them : Hence it came to pass, where one Minister hath been admonished, suspended, deprived for Heresie in Doctrine, or Un-godliness of Life, ten have been so dealt with for Non-Conformity ; and where one of the People have been censured for scandalous sins, an hundred have been troubled and punished for going to hear a good Minister out of their own Parish, when they had an ignorant drunkard at home, for not having their Children Crossed in Baptism, for scrupling to kneel at the Sacrament, and such other great Crimes against the Liturgy. What was this but to alienate the Church of Christ to the Governours, and to make it to serve them more then him, and only to use his Name and Authority to press their own Laws, and maintain their own power.

R. 4. They were dissatisfied at the Ceremonies imposed in the Liturgy. In the general they acknowledge, that it was lawful for any Church to consent to, and lay upon her self necessary Rites and Customs, such as Circumstances of time, and place, and other emergencies might make necessary for the present time ; but that such Ceremonies should be such whose necessity was apparent to all, and whose lawfulness might be scrupled justly by none of common understanding, and that should be taken up by the general Consent of the People as well as commanded by Rulers, as the Feast of *Purim* was by the Jews, *Ester* 9. 23. 27. And those necessary things enjoyed, *Acts* 15, 23. 25. 28. And that when the necessity ceaseth,

ceaseth, those Customes should cease also. But they thought it utterly unlawful to devise Rites or Ceremonies for which there was neither apparent necessity, nor usefulness, or to impose those upon the people, which from the beginning were doubtful and offensive, especially to make them parts of Divine Worship, or additions to it, as it were to render it more edifying; beyond the natural and common Civil circumstances of Order, Method, or Decorum, and such they thought it manifest our imposed Ceremonies were, which are declared to be retained, some, because they served for decent order in the Church (for which they were at first devised) others for edification. And again that the imposers were content with those Ceremonies *Pres. to the Common Prayer Book.* which do serve to a decent order, and Godly Discipline, and such as be apt to stir up the dull mind of man to the remembrance of his duty to God by some notable and special signification, whereby he might be edified.

Three Ceremonies were at first imposed. The Cross in Baptism. The Surplice in Reading the Service. And Kneeling in Receiving the Lords Supper. Against these they excepted severally.

1. Against the Crosse, that it was abused to great superstition and Idolatry in the Church of *Rome*, and particularly when it was used in Baptism, having Divine power ascribed to it, of driving away the Devils, giving grace, &c. Therefore being neither commanded of God, nor used in this manner in the primitive Church, *viz.* To admit Members into the Church by it, it ought to be rejected.

Also that it did reflect very dishonourably on Baptism it self, as if that were not full and plain enough to set forth the blood of Christ, and Remission of sins by it, or our engagement to Christ, and therefore it was needful to adde a more plain and direct sign of his death, and suffering for us, and of what we must be willing to suffer for him, above all that the Cross was made, and here used as a Sacrament, being declared to be a token of the Childrens owning the Faith of Christ, Obedience to him, and perseverance to the end: Is not this the nature and end of Receiving Baptism it self? Why is not that sufficient, but the Cross is presently added without any note of distinction, as it were to signifie the same things more plainly and fully, and to lay a greater obligation on the Child, then what was laid on it in Baptism, and this is a Sacrament as much as man can make. Indeed it wanteth the

promise of Divine Grace, but this also is presumed upon, forasmuch as this seems chiefly to be intended in those words [*of some of the Ceremonies being apt to stir up the dull mind of man to the remembrance of his duty, by some notable and special signification where- by he might be edified.*]

2. Against the Surplice they object, that was a Ceremony on purpose devised to add decency and splendour to the Worship of God, and therefore it must be used in that Worship only, and such Ceremonies are unlawful additions to Gods Worship. And those circumstances or accidents of the Service in their absolute nature, yet relatively, in as much as they better the Worship and increase Edification, they are made moral parts of Worship, even as it was a part of Worship for the Priests of old to put on their Sacred vestments to sacrifice in, though the vestments themselves absolutely and naturally considered were but circumstances of the Worship. Also that the Surplice seemed to be taken from the Ceremonial-Law, and to be at least an imitation of those Priests Garments. As many other Ceremonies used in the ancient Church, were either taken from the Jews, or devised to imitate and be like them. Now our Saviour having abolished the old Ceremonies gave no leave to his Church to devise new ones, neither did he abolish them, as Types and Shadows of himself only, but also as Yokes and Burthens, as carnal Ordinances and servile Customs, wherein his People were kept in great Bondage till his coming in the flesh, *Gal. 5. 1. Acts 15. 10. Gal. 4. 1, 2, 3. John 1. 17.* Therefor such Ceremonies were utterly unnecessary since the full discovery of the Gospel, yea, they disparage the Gospel, as if that was not plain and sufficiently apt to teach Faith or Holiness without their help. And besides they take off mens minds from the Worship of God, partly by pleasing their eyes, and fancies, with an external shew, and partly by busying their thoughts about the meaning of them, and how to improve them, if they be serious in the use of them: They also bring the People again into bondage, and fill the Church with carnal Ordinances and beggarly institutions, and men are sensibly taught to content themselves with outward forms and modes of Service, and to think God is content with them also; and further the use of the Surplice in Divine Service, kept up too much resemblance betwixt our Ministers and the Priests of *Rome*, and the ignorant might be tempted to think there was very little difference betwixt our Church and *Rome*, seeing we came so near them in their Service, and

and in the manner and circumstances of the Service also. Nevertheless they accounted it not unlawful to have continued the use of the Surplice till the People were weaned from it, and accordingly many did use it, it being not in it self unlawful, as the use of the Crosse was.

3. Against Kneeling at the Lords Supper, they pleaded that it should by no means have been retained in our Church being brought into the Church at first, only upon the opinion of Transubstantiation and worshipping the Sacrament, and very apt to continue the same opinion in the People: It is also certain our Saviour neither used, nor appointed that gesture, nor gave his Church Authority to enjoin any other, then what he used, as a standing precept, for thereby, he, and his practice should be taxed as not using the most fit gesture, nor is this gesture at all proper to this Ordinance, but thwarteth the two main ends of it, *viz.* Free Communion with Christ in the participation of his benefits; and the Renewing of Love, and Strengthening Communion among the People, for it is a gesture of great awe, reverence, and distance, not fit for Meditation on the promises, or consideration of the death of Christ, or the incomprehensible love that he manifested therein. Also by Kneeling the People were severed from each other, and could not beat the Table many together, very unlike to a feast of Love, nay, the presence of many would be an hindrance, and not a furtherance of Affection and Devotion. Both these inconveniencies were greatly increased, when the People were forced to come up to the Table at the upper end of the Chancel, and there to kneel before the rails a few at a time (for they must come to but one side of the Table) for this was much more unlike a Supper of Love betwixt Christ and his Spouse, and betwixt fellow Members of the same body; yet they accounted not this gesture in it self unlawful, but that they who would might use it and it might be retained in the Church, till the People could freely leave it off, but that it was unfit to be imposed and purposedly kept up, much more to be enforced with the highest penalty upon those that were dissatisfied with it.

The Non-conformists were much strengthened in their dissatisfaction with the Established Church way, because instead of obtaining any redress and reformation, all the impositions were continued and things made worse, and the imposers went backward, rather then forward, notwithstanding the Non-conformists increased in number both in Ministers and People, and at length became a very con-

considerable part of the Church, whose complaints ought therefore to have been considered and redressed. There is a passage in the 20th *Artic.* to be subscribed by all Ministers, *that the Church hath power in matters of Faith.*

This the Non-Conformists disliked unless more explained : Therefore the Parliament in the 13 *Eliz.* which established those Articles by Law caused that passage to be left out. Bishop *Laud*

*B. Laud's Speech
in the Star Cham-
ber.*

confesseth that it was not to be found in the Original of the Articles of that year, viz 1570 yet the Bishop continued the passage in the Articles, and required subscription to it. Also that Parliament enacted that if any Minister was admitted into our Church, having other Ordination than what was established amongst us, he should declare his Assent, and subscribe to

all the Articles of Religion which only concern the
13 *Eliz. Cap.* Confession of the True Christian Faith, and the
12. Doctrine of the Sacraments. By this they gave indulgence to those that were not satisfied with

the Episcopal Ordination, and could not subscribe to the 39 *Artic.* absolutely, because the approbation of the *Homilies* and Book of Consecration with the fore-mentioned passage were included in them,

being content that they subscribed to the Doctrine of Faith, and of the Sacraments contained in the Articles, but the Bishops would not

allow this indulgence, at least not long, nor generally, but urged absolute subscription to the great trouble of many Non-conformists. Nor could any amendment of the Liturgy ever be procured, but on the contrary, some passages left out that reflected much on the Papists, as that Petition in the Letany, *from the Tyranny of the Bishop of Rome, good Lord deliver us,* and a whole Prayer in the office for Gun-powder Treason expung'd by *B. Laud*, wherein it was said, *that the Religion of Papists is Rebellion, their Faith faction, and their practice the Murthering of Souls, and Bodies.*

Nor were any of the Ceremonies taken away, or their imposition remitted, but rather more added to them by the Bishops Cannons, though not by Parliament. * The Cross in Baptism was confirmed and enforced, *Can. 30.* Under *K. James*, and the explication there given, increased the suspicion of the unlawfulness of it, they also brought in bowing at the name of Jesus, *Can. 18.* And their dipping of Children in Baptism, turning the Communion Tables

into

into Altars, bowing towards them, or towards the East, (for they agree not what it was they bowed toward,) were brought in by *B. Laud*, and pressed with great Rigour, though never established by Law. In *Q. Eliz.* Reign they were content that Ministers Read the Service Book, without declaring their judgment concerning it, only it was said in the 39 Articles, viz, *Artic. 36.* That the Book of Consecration contained nothing that was in it self superstitious or ungodly. But Arch Bishop *Whitgift* devised a subscription of his own, and imposed it upon all to be ordained after that time which was at length turned into a Cannon, *Can. 36. Artic. 2.* In these words, *that the Book of Common Prayer, and of Ordaining Bishops, Priests and Deacons, containeth nothing in it, contrary to the Word of God, and that it may Lawfully be used, and that he himself will use the form in the said Book prescribed, in publick Prayers, and Administration of the Sacraments, and no other.* The Bishop knew that the Non-Conformists thought the Cross in Baptism (prescribed in the Common Prayer Book,) unlawfull and against the Word of God, and that some of them thought the order of Bishops unlawfull also, and all of them the order of Deacons as prescribed by that Book, and yet here they must subscribe not only that they will use the book, and no other form in publick; but that it contains nothing contrary to the Word of God.

This subscription was not only imposed on those that should hereafter be ordained, but it is also decreed that no man shall be suffered to Preach or Catechize, or be a Lecturer, or read any Lecture in Divinity in the Universities, Cathedral, or Colligate Churches, or in City, Market, Town, Church or Chappel whatsoever within this Realm, unless he first subscribed to this Article; with two others contained in this Cannon, and by means hereof many worthy Ministers were quickly turned out of their Livings, though the Lawyers generally declared that it was against the Laws of the Land, that any man should be turned out of his Free-hold, (such as Ministers Livings are,) without an Act of Parliament, and to make all sure, they ordained Cannon 55, that Preachers before all Sermons, Lectures or Homilies, should only invite the people to pray, naming a few heads of Prayer, which respect the publick only, and none concerning the people in particular, so that now no other Prayer must be used in publick, but those in the Service Book, which made the Burthen more intolerable. Moreover in this Book of Canons they ordain that Ministers shall admit none to the Lords

Supper that will not kneel, or that come not to the Prayers, or that speak against the Book of Common Prayer or Ceremonies, or the

book of Consecration of Bishops, &c. Till they acknowledge their Fault in word or writing if they can.

Can. 27. That Fathers shall not be God-Fathers to their own Children, nor so much as urged to be present at their Baptism.

In a word all that the Bishops knew, that the Non-Conformists were dissatisfied with, in the Service

Can. 29. Book were established by these Cannons, and they rigorously prosecuted upon them from that time, viz, 1603 to 1640.

For the Government of the Church by Bishops, and administration of that Government by Lay-Chancellours Commissaries, &c. in *Q. Eliz.* time the Governours were contented with a peaceable submission from the Non-Conformists, but under *K. James* the Cannons fore-named enjoyed all Ministers to subscribe, that there was nothing in the Book of Consecration of Bishops, Priests and Deacons contrary to the Word of God. And now *B. Billson* and *B. Andrews* pleaded for the Divine Right of Episcopacy, and *B. Laud* imposed an Oath (commonly called the Oath & *Cetera*,) upon the Clergy, whereby they should promise, not to endeavour to alter the Government of the Church as it was established by Arch-bishops, Bishops, Deans, &c. And thus all the moderation that had been used by the former Bishops in pressing things scrupled, was turned into the most rigorous imposition of them, yea and of additions to them also, as if *Rehoboam's* success should terrify no man from acting according to his answer to the People, that he would add to their burthens, and change their Whips into Scorpions, and this leads to the next reason of the Dissent of those former Non-Conformists.

Rea. 6. The Tyrannical Imposition of the Lyurgy, and all that belonged to it, was a great means to increase their dissatisfaction. There had been a passage in the Preface of the Common Prayer book, that the first Reformers had gone as farr as they could, in reforming the Church, considering the times they lived in, and they hoped those that came after them would, as they better might do more. And indeed this was the Ground of the submission and patience of the Non-Conformists, viz, a persuasion that the first Reformers at least the best of them did not intend their moddle as *a ne plus ultra*, and therefore they still hoped, that by Patience and peaceable

endea-

endeavours, things might by begrees be brought to a better pass; accordingly they presented an admonition to the Parliament; *Anno* 1570. And again a Petition to *K. James* called the Millinary Petition for ease and redress; but alas! as that passage of the Reformers is left out of the Preface to the service book, so the expungers of it fixed a just contrary mark to themselves, which they aim at to this day in all their proceedings; viz, that there was no necessity of any farther Reformation, then what was established by *Q. Eliz.* and that all must be compelled to approve of that as sufficient, and to submit to the Rules of it.

The better to prosecute this design, they have ever laboured to set the Princes against the Non-conformists, and themselves have used the Spiritual Sword chiefly against them, they did what they could to prejudice that Excellent Princess *Q. Eliz.* against them so that in her Reign especially when *Whitgift*, was Arch-Bishop, the Non-Conformists were turned out of Universities, as *Dr Sampson* Dean of Christs-Church in *Oxford*, *Mr Cartwright* Margarine Professour at *Cambridge*, and many others, many were turned out of Livings, some worthy men imprisoned, and *Mr John Udall* Minister of *Kingston* upon *Thames* was sentenced to dye for high Treason against the Queen, in Defaming her Government, which saith *Dr Fuller* was somewhat hard, being but a remote consequence, for all that was alledged against him was, that in a Preface to a certain book; he had sharply taxed the Remissness of the Bishops Government. And now such was the Rigour of Prosecutions against the Non-Conformists, and the remissness of Discipline toward the ignorant and scandalous, both Ministers and People, that it gave occasion to many to separate from, and renounce the Church of *England* as no true Church, who were then called *Brownists*, when *K. James* came to the Crown, the Bishops so quickly incensed him against the Dissenters, that in the conference at *Hampton-Court* appointed on purpose to hear their exceptions, he would scarce give them leave to speak, he sent them away with taunts and threats, and often declared that were men never so able and pious, yet the Church had better want their labours, then have her Orders broken by their Non-Conformity, which maxime I am sorry to find *Dr Stillingfleet* to espouse, Under *K. Charles* the 1st, the Bishops had so wholly engaged the civil power in their cause, that it was almost the only concern of the Government how to bring all the Non-Conformists in *England* to submit, or to leave the Land,

and to bring *Ireland* to the same plat-form with *England*, and to set up Bishops, Liturgies and Ceremonies, in *Scotland*, and now Ministers and People were driven many thousands into *New-England*, *Holland*, and other Forreign Parts, they were suspended, silenced, deprived of their Livings, imprisoned, fined, set in the Pillory stigmatized, had their ears cut off, banished into remote Islands, and many other such pressures were laid upon them, which many living yet remember.

Nor were the Bishops ever ashamed to use their own power, and to appear in person against these men, in what danger soever Church or State was, Conformity must be urged, and Non-Conformists suppress'd. In the very beginning of Reformation Mr *Hooper* was imprisoned by *B. Cranmer*, and *Ridley*, for refusing the use of some Ceremonies, when he was to be consecrated Bishop, and though the King by his Letter under his own hand commanded them to dispense with him, yet they would not condescend: when a Congregation of Exiles for Religion, were settled at *Franckford*, under *Q. Mary*, because they had laid aside the English Liturgy and Ceremonies; *B. Cox* of *Ely*, and his Company coming afterwards to the same City, first quarrelled with them, and disturbed them in the Church, and then incensed the Magistrates against them, so that they were forced to leave the City to find o'her refuge. The Mouths of all the Cannons almost are Levelled against the Non-Conformists, none almost but they felt the Rigour of the High Commission, and Star-Chamber Courts, few were suspended, silenced, or fined, or excommunicated, but for not using the Cross, not wearing the Surplice, following Sermons abroad, for not kneeling at the Sacrament, &c. Mr. *Hildersham* was suspended from preaching and benefice 12 years together, and fined two thousand pound to the King, only for giving the Lords Supper unto two of his Parish without kneeling, and the Communicants Mr. *Holt* and Mr. *Ditton* were fined each of them 1000 pounds for receiving without kneeling. And how Arch-Bishop *Land* exceeded all before him in prosecuting the Non-Conformists, is fresh in Memory.

Now the usage of them, besides that it might exasperate the Spirits of men, and alienate them from the things imposed, which is incident to all men, it did also add weight to their Reasons against Conformity; because they saw that the Bishops pressed their own Laws and Constitutions more then the Laws of Christ. That they usurped authority without, and against the consent of the Church,

not only to enjoin things on their practise, but also to impose the approbation of them upon their judgments, and consciences which they knew before hand were dissatisfied in those things, and also that they were now become declared enemies to further reformation, and thought they should rather abate of the First Reformation, and go nearer to *Rome* then stir one Hairs breadth further from her. This made Conformity justly more scrupled, when after 90 years endeavours for reformation, they had *Pharaohs* Answer, and were beaten to their burthens, and not ought of the tale of their brick to be diminished.

And now the case between the Conformists and Non-Conformists is quite altered, viz : after the making of the Cannons 1603. before the question was, whether the things imposed as Liturgy, Ceremonies, &c. might not be born with, especially with the help of some connivances of moderate Bishops in those things that they most scrupled, because it was but the beginning of reformation, and the Governours both Civil and Ecclesiastical, were not yet weaned from the old Discipline and customs of their Fathers, nor were the people likely to bear more purity, and to part with all their old customs at once, and upon these grounds the Non-Conformists kept the Communion of the Church of *England*, and generally submitted to the practise of most things imposed : but now since all things before complained of, were turned into Cannons, and standing Laws and must not only be practised, but approved also under their hands, to stand upon record in the Registers of the Bishops Courts, and all that would not subscribe must be cast out, or kept out of the Ministry, and the People likewise were generally weary of the impositions, as well as the Ministers, and disliked them as too much symbolizing with *Rome*, and therefore all the Church Censures must be bent against them whom the Cannons called Schismatics for this cause only. Now I say the question was whether the first reformation was not compleat ? and we *Can : 27:* ought not to go any further from *Rome*, in Liturgy, Ceremonies, Government and Discipline, but take up with them as a perfect Church Moddle, at least such as had no other imperfections in it, then all Constitutions in this world are subject to ?

This alteration of the state of the Question was much increased, when the Court and our Princes took up new measures of Marrying with Popish Princes abroad, and mixing interest with them, whereby

whereby they were necessitated to desert the protection and assistance which they had hitherto given to Protestants abroad; (which the *German* and *French* Protestants in their wars quickly felt the effects of,) but also to remit their zeal against the Papists at home *viz*: to suspend the execution of *Laws* against them, to entertain them at Court, to receive them into offices, to suffer their Priests and Jesuits to come over in multitudes, and quickly to seduce the people: and that which was a necessary consequence of all this to discountenance and punish Zealous Ministers and People, who found fault with these proceedings, as Puritanes, overhot, indiscreet factious, and enemies to the State; for this practise of the Court drew the Church along with it, as it usually doth: and all men that had a mind to rise must plead for the Lawfulness of Protestants Marrying with Papists, and allowing them their worship, and of conniving at Papists amongst us, and at last to study to gratifie and meet the Papists as farr as they could, and to bring back more of their Doctrines and Ceremonies, till at length it was become an indifferent thing, whether a man was a Papist or a Protestant, so he were not a Puritane, and continued in that Church he was born and baptized in. *Vid Russhw. Col. Part 1. p. 213, The Parliaments Censure of Mr. Mountagues Papers.* This temper did the Church men fall into immediately upon the publick attempt for the Spanish match, and it spread more amongst them, till Arch-Bishop *Laud* being made head of the party, had almost made a second sort of Non-Conformists, *viz*, Puritane Conformists, as they called them, *i. e.* Those that conformed to the Liturgy and Discipline established by Law, but could not approve of the new design of moderation toward, and Union with the Papists, which the Arch-Bishop and all his followers professed and owned.

And now the case was altered to purpose, for it was now Puritanism and Faction to be an Anti-Arminian, to be zealous against Popery, to preach twice a Sabbath, to pray before or after Sermon, to keep the Sabbath Holy, and in a word to be seriously religious, in the people? and for the Ministers to preach for it, this was Puritanism; and our Reformers were thought too nice and strait-laced, our Articles and Homilies too strict, and fit to be qualified, and our Martyrs Fools and Rebels. The Non-Conformists now thought they had great reason to stand off from Conformity, seeing all their fears were verified before their eyes; that our nearness to *Rome* would endanger our returning to her again, and seeing
Conformity

Conformity it self, to Law and Canons would signify little, unless a man would go beyond both, in obedience to his Superiours, to promote the new design. This was the case of the old Non-Conformists till the long Parliament stopped the stream : upon the whole we may observe, the case betwixt our former Non-Conformists and the Church of *England* was the same in substance, as betwixt the Brethren of *Bohemia* and the *Calixtines*, the *Calvinists* and *Lutherans* in *Germany*, the *Bohemian Calixtines*, if the Pope would grant them the Cup, in the Sacrament, and three or four more reformations of abuses in the Roman Church, they thought it reformation enough, and that they need go no farther, and they would compell the brethren who were for a total desertion of *Rome*, to be of the same mind and practise with them, and that by force of Arms. The *Lutherans* in *Germany* having only reformed the Doctrine of the Church, and the Idolatry of the Mass, and cast off the Popes Tyranny and some other corruptions of *Rome*, yet retained Adoration of the Sacrament, kneeling to it, Surplices, Images, Holy days, and could not be content to do this themselves, unless they could perswade and inforce all Protestants to do so likewise. Hence they will not own the *Calvinists* as brethren, nor hold any Communion with them, nor recede from any thing they had taken up, but rather proceed to take in more of the Popish Doctrines, as those we call Arminianism, and have often treated, seriously some of them, about reconciliation with the Papists; but always frustrated, yea detested any endeavours of it with the Calvinists : Thus the Conformists of *England* have contended so much for their Liturgy and Service, and Government, &c. That they would compell all to be content with the same moddle with themselves, and would not suffer any to be Ministers or Members of the Church, that would desire any further reformation : and at last come to this pitch, that they would rather take in more of *Rome*, yea reconcile with her upon some terms, than abate any thing to their brethren. Nor were these the actions of a few particular men, but of all the Heads of the Church, Arch-Bishops and Bishops generally age after age. The worst of their principle and practises were never condemned by the Church, but made the way to the highest preferments; so that the moderation of a few amongst them will no more excuse the Church of *England*, then a few sober Papists may excuse the Church of *Rome*.

C H A P. IV.

The Non-conformists justified in their Principles by Scripture, Antiquity, and the Example of all Reformed Churches.

THe Non-conformists as they gave the forenamed reasons why they could not approve of, or subscribe to the Constitutions of the Church of *England*, so they supposed that this their dissent was not grounded upon meer scruples and weakness of judgement (though their Opposites love to impute it to such Causes) but they alleadged for themselves the Authority of Scripture, and the Examples both of the Primitive and the late Reformed Churches.

1. From the Scriptures they pleaded, that there was neither command, example, nor shadow of any Liturgy, *i. e.* *prescript form of words, wherein all the publick worship of God should be administred*, either in the Old or New Testament, under the Law the externals and circumstances of Gods worship were much more prescribed and limited than under the Gospel, as the place, the Tabernacle or Temple time, Morning and Evening, yet was it never commanded that all the Priests and People should use the same form of words in prayer, when and where ever they met. There is indeed a form of blessing the people, when the Assembly was to be dismissed, but that consisted in but a few words, nor can it be proved that they used always those very words, or that it was so intended in the command, (*Núm. 6. 22.* to the end,) the same words are often used in Scripture to signify the same sense, or to that purpose, not the same Syllables, and so it is in all Authors, nor is there any form of words prescribed wherein men should confess their sins over the Sacrifices, or wherein Circumcision or the Passover should be administred, but on the contrary we find, *David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Ezra*, the Levites in *Nehemiah's* time and others prayed *pro re nata* according to the occasion, as their own hearts directed them. And therefore it seems as God did not command, so neither did the Jewish Church make and enjoin any stated Litur-

gie, unless any shall unhappily take the Superstitious and ridiculous Liturgy of the present Jews to have been used amongst them from the beginning: Certainly there is no footsteps of any such thing in our Saviours time, who duly kept to the rules of Gods worship, and broke no good orders of the Church. The Apostles also as long as they could, frequented the Jewish Temple and Synagogues, but of any Platforms of Prayer or Service, other then the institutions of the Law, we find no memorial; Now if the Jewish Priesthood were able to discharge their Office without prescript forms of words, and that people might be safely committed to their Priests in the exercise of each mans own gifts, how much better may it be done, and such liberty granted, both to Ministers and People under the Gospel, where the Spirit of God, and the means of knowledge are given much more abundantly? Nor are there more evidences of any Liturgy in the New Testament, then their was in the old either prescribed by Christ, or his Apostles, or used by them, or commanded to future Churches. Nor any rule laid down whereupon Churches might ground their practise of framing, and imposing such Lyturgies, But we read, that when our Lord Jesus ascended into Heaven he gave gifts to men, *Eph. 4. 16 &c. viz.* Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelists to lay the foundation of his Church, and Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting the Saints, *for the work of the Ministry, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature in Jesus Christ, ver. 12, 13.* from whence it seemeth plain, that our Lord Jesus Christ thought it sufficient to appoint a standing Ministry to take care of his Church to the end of the world, and to furnish them with the gifts of his Spirit to edifie the people, and to keep the unity of the faith, with out requiring, or authorizing them, to make Lyturgies, whereby to fetter themselves, or others.

Moreover the Scriptures give neither command, example, nor countenance, to the peoples answering in Publick worship more then Amen; only, at the close of Publick Prayer. It is probable that the Singers in the Temple standing Ward against Ward, did sing alternately, *i. e.* one rank one sentence, and another rank another, as they do in our Cathedrals, but this was not the people, and they were an Order of men appointed by *David* by Divine inspiration, for this work, and so the manner and method also, was appointed by God, and Art, and rules of Musick, were then acceptable, and part of the Ceremonial worship. But there being such Offices, nor such

service appointed in the Christian Church, this is no warrant for our Responses.

Neither do the Scriptures give any warrant or example for observing dayes as sacred in the honour of Saints, Or of instituting new Offices in the Church; or new Ceremonies of worship, but on the contrary our Saviour declares that men worship in vain that teach for Doctrines the Commandements of men, *Matth. 15. 9.* It seems then, That Decency and Order which men purposely devise to add significancy or comeliness to Gods worship is abominable in his sight, he hath no need of mans service, and therefore will accept of nothing but what is appointed and carried on by his own Spirit.

Neither do the Scriptures appoint or warrant any superiority of Bishops above ordinary Ministers, at least not such as that they should have sole power of governing the Church. The high Priests of old had no such power of the Priests as this Learned Doctor hath proved in his *Irenicum*, They had some peculiar things appropriated to their office, but were themselves subject to the *Sanhedrim*. The Apostles were all of one Order, and had no authority over each other, and governed the Church only by consent, *Gal. 2. 9.* Nor is there any distinction made betwixt ordinary Ministers, except what they see needful to make amongst themselves, for the good of the Church. This all our old Bishops acknowledged, and therefore pleaded for Episcopacy only as an humane constitution; And those who of late wrote for its Divine-right, do yet, the most learned of them acknowledge, that it cannot be proved from Scripture, unless perhaps from the Angels of the Churches of *Asia*, which this Dr. hath solidly confuted.

It was alwaies objected to the Non-conformists, that the Scriptures do not forbid those things though they do not command them, But they replied that the Non-command of any thing in Gods worship and Church is a prohibition, except of those things only that occasionally become necessary, or that are naturally, necessary circumstances of such actions as are commanded; for it would argue great imperfection in the Law, if it should omit things that are constantly or generally necessary for the good of the Church: And as *Moses* closed his Law with this command that none should adde or diminish it, so Christ having given his Law to his Church, and appointed Officers with power to make, govern, and cast members out of it as there was need, without giving them liberty to adde or alter; He also did virtually prohibit such additions or alterations, till he

he shall come again, and their Commission being only to teach, baptize, and to teach all that Christ commands to the end of the world, *Mat. 28. 18. 19.* This doth sufficiently restrain them from making or teaching commands of their own, all their authority being grounded on that Commission.

2. From Antiquity the Non-Conformists alledge that the primitive Churches for many hundred years had no stated Liturgies, prescribing the words as well as method of worship.

Justin Martyr in his second Apology designedly gives an account of the Christian worship, viz, the order and method of praying, preaching, admitting of Members, administering both Sacraments, but hath no word of a prescribed form; but he saith the Minister prayed *bono divinis* as he was able, *Tertullian* giving the same account in his *Apol. Cap. 39.* saith likewise, *sine monitore quia de pectore oramus* they prayed by heart, and therefore had no prompter, much less a book.

We read that *Constantine* the great, having *Euseb. de vit :* abolished idolatry, composed a form of Prayer *constant. l. 4. cap:* for his Heathen Souldiers, wherein they should 19. 20.

pray to one God the Creatour of all things, but we read of no form imposed on Christians. There are indeed Liturgies that goe under the names of the Apostle *James*, *Basil*, *Chrysostome*, and *Ambrose*; but they convince themselves to be forged by later men, and so are an argument that there were no such things in the primitive times, but when the Church was over-run with errours and superstitions, it was appointed in

Africa, that the Ministers should either receive a *Can. Milvet.* form of Prayer from their Bishops, or shew their *2dum. Can. 12.* own Prayer to them for their approbation, but

this was above 400 years after Christ, the usurpation of Bishops, Lazines, and ambition of Ministers, ignorance and superstition in the people bred Liturgies, and they grew up together. Nor is their any mention of Responses in the Antient Church, a superstitious story of a vision of Angels singing an Hymn, in that manner by turns, is pretended to be seen by *Ignatius*, dead long before, nor had the antient Church, days holy to Saints for 300 years and upward, we find only mention amongst them of Easter-day, and yet that caused such division and contentions that it might have been a warning to after ages for contending about things that God hath not commanded.

The Apocryphal Books were indeed read in the Christian Church very antiently, though they never were amongst the *Jews*, but it was more excusable in them than in us, because it was long ere the books of the Scripture, especially the books of the New Testament were gathered into one Volumn, or it was agreed among the Churches which were Canonical, and which Apocryphal, for some of the Apocryphal were read in some Churches as Canonical, and some of the Canonical were by some Churches rejected. The Cross in Baptism was so long unknown to the Church that it is hard to say when it came in, though the sign of the Cross was commonly used amongst them upon their Cloaths, in their Hats, to distinguish them from Heathens, and as a token that they were Christians, the *Montanists* began to make a superstitious use of the Cross, and so did many others soon after, *Constantine* himself can scarce be excused, if *Eusebius* be credited, but that it was annexed to Baptism, and made a symbole of mens embracing Christianity, there is no record. Kneeling at the Lords Supper was not enjoined till transubstantiation was established above 1200 years after Christ, nor is any general example for it pretended in former ages.

The Surplice was much Elder then the Cross in Baptism, or kneeling at the Supper, yet for 200 years and upwards there is no mention of it, nor is it known when or how it came in; many Rites, Customs and Ceremonies were used in the Primitive Churches, some being derived from the *Jews*, some from the Heathens by the converts of both sorts, yet not imposed upon others, the Apostles Rule being yet observed that no man should judge another in meats or drinks, or in respect of an holy day, *i. e.* the Jewish Festivals, which were once of divine institution.

Nor did the first Churches pretend to make new Officers, or constitute any Government other than Christ appointed, Presbyters and Deacons are the Church Officers which they owned, indeed there is frequent mention of Bishops in Antient Authors: but *Augustine* 400 years after Christ, saith, that a Bishop was but *titulus honoris* a name of honour given to one Minister above the rest, but that they were all alike, and his contemporary *Hierome*, *olim Ecclesie Communi Presbyterorum concilio regebantur*, that Churches were governed by the common consent of the Presbytery; and of the practise of his own time he, saith *quid facit Episcopus excepta ordinatione quod non facit Presbyter*, nothing but Ordination was appropriated.

appropriated to the Bishop, the Presbyters did every thing else as well as he; divers learned men (never yet answered,) have proved that all antiquity acknowledged Bishops and Presbyters to be but one order of Ministers, and our Dr thought it once impossible certainly to state what was the Government of the Primitive Church, but this is certain that in *Cyprians* time, *Anno Christi* 250, the Bishop did nothing in the Government without the consent of his Clergy, and approbation of the people, and to them *Cyprian* ascribeth even to the common people the cheif power of choosing and refusing their Bishops, and of withdrawing from them that were unworthy, so that all that hath been said in the defence, or excuse of our prelacy with sole power of government administred by Lay-men, is nothing to the purpose, when we dispute whether Christ appointed, or the Primitive Church had Bishops; seeing all sides agree that, That, Church never had such Bishops, and such Discipline, or any Bishops at all but what were chosen by the Clergy and people for near a Thousand years.

3. Nor do the Reformed Churches retain those things which our Non-conformists scruple; They all wholly laid aside both the substance and the Form of the *Roman* service. Their *Lyturgie*, Responses, short prayers, repetitions, Ceremonies, and use of the Apocryphal writings; also their Government and Discipline, except the *Lutherans*, who retain many of their Ceremonies, and Holy-days, with some of their errours in Doctrine. The Protestants have generally composed short *Lyturgies* of their own, containing some few forms of Prayer, together with a Method of Publick worship, and directions for Visitation of the sick, &c. But they neither put in things that may be scrupled, nor imposed forms of words on their Ministers, as our *Lyturgy* doth in all Offices, Publick and Private. The *Waldenses* our first Reformers, and a Noble race of Confessors and Martyrs, governed themselves by the Common consent of their Pastours and Elders chosen out of the People. *Hist. Waldens. lib. 2. cap. 2. & 4.* as do all the Reformed Churches at this day except the *Lutherans*. The *Bohemians* indeed, and some *Waldenses* in *Austria* thought a Bishop necessary by Divine Institution, but that he was to doe nothing in the Church of himself, but all by the consent of the Presbyters, and with the approbation of the people, which is *Cyprian*

Jerom. Epist. ad Evag.

Epist. 4.

*Commend.
Exhort.*

ans:

ans Bishop, not an English Prelate. The *Lutherans* have their Superintendents or Bishops, but by humane Constitution and such as deprive not the Ministers of their Office.

Now seeing Scripture, Antiquity, and the practise of all Reformed Churches doe so much favour their cause; The Non-conformists thought they had a great deal of reason to persist in their desire of further Reformation in the Church of *England*, and in their dissent from those things for which nothing material can be soberly pleaded, but the command of the Magistrate. So that all the blame of want of Perfect Reformation, and of keeping up divisions in our own Church, and turning its Censures against many of its best members, is from age to age laid wholly upon the Kings and Parliaments by those who would yet be taken for the greatest maintainers of reverence to Authority.

C H A P. V.

The Reasons of the present Non-conformists, in Particular for their dissent.

THe Non-conformists of the present Age, *viz.* such as cannot conform to the *Liturgy* of the Church of *England*, according to Act of Uniforty made 1662, have all the same reasons for their Non-conformity, that their Predecessours had, and some new ones peculiar to themselves, for both all the same things in the *Lyturgy* and Government which were a burthen to their Fathers, are imposed on them, without the least abatement, amendment, or alteration; and also new impositions are laid upon them, to make the yoke more intollerable, These are such as follow,

1. That they were denied all Reformation of the *Lyturgy* and Government of the Church. It was now somewhat above an hundred years that there had been continued desires of amendment in the *Lyturgy* and Government, but none could be obtained. King *James* in the beginning of his Reign made a shew of hearing the Non-conformists objections in the Conference at *Hampton-Court*, But the issue was only to make a greater pretence to enjoyn Conformity more

more strictly, as having heard all their Reasons against it, and found nothing worthy consideration in them. In like manner the present Non-conformists were dealt with, for as we are told in the Preface to the Act of Uniformity: First some Divines both Conformists and Non-conformists were by Commission appointed to review the Service book, and to make necessary amendments in it; next, a Convocation of the Conforming Clergy was called to re-view the book, last of all his Majesty had seen and re-viewed what they had done, and the issue of all this was, that the Epistles and Gospels should be read in the new Translation, and to amend two or three words, which by the fault of the Printers had crept into the Book and spoiled the sense, and nothing considerable, and then the Book passed an Act of Parliament, requiring more rigorous Conformity then ever before. The Parliament not once reading the book, but with an implicate faith (as a Member of the House of Commons said) passed, and confirm'd (under the highest penalties next to death it self,) that which they never saw, nor examined. And yet now the Reasons for Non-conformity were stronger then before, There had been sufficient time to wean the people from the Modes and Ceremonies in dispute, yea and the body of the people were now sufficiently weary of them, and the greater number of Learned and pious Ministers desired they might be laid aside above all, they had been laid aside about sixteen years, and the people were well content, nor was there any decay of knowledge, or piety amongst them upon this alteration. Now was there a fair occasion to have amended any thing amiss, and for the Bishops to have there Non-conforming brethren gratified in any reasonable things; who were now as considerable as themselves for Number, and interest with the People, and yet offered to consent to any reasonable terms of accomodation; surely all this did neither encourage nor oblige the Non-conformists to submit to that new Act of Uniformity.

2. But instead of amending any thing amiss, or disliked in the Liturgy, some things were added to make it more offensive, viz, Sundays are more expressly reckoned as Church-Fasts; than in the former book, the new book saith thus, *a Table of all the Feasts that are to be observed in the Church of England through the year, all Sundays in the year.* The former book thus, *these holy days to be observed and no other, all Sundays in the year;* The word Holy-day, which was somewhat suspicious is now changed to Feast-day, and Sundays put in the number of Feast-days, without any distinction, which

which makes it more evident that they are accounted but Church Festivals. The 29 of *September* in the old book is appointed a Festival to *Michael* the Arch-Angel, the new book adds, and to all *Angels*, so that this is a Festival in the honour of all the Angels as the First of *Novemb.* is in honour of all the Saints, also two new Holy-days are added, never before enjoined by the former book, viz: *St Pauls* Conversion, and *St Barnabas*. Moreover in the book of Consecration several passages are added, declaring Bishops to be a distinct order from the Presbyters, and the 36th *Artic.* is appointed to be understood of this book, herein they contradict the Law, and the Judgment of all our first Reformers in K. *Edw.* and Q. *Eliz.* days, and the very book of Consecration it self.

3. Nevertheless all Ministers are to approve this book, and that by a publick declaration in the Congregation, when they first enter upon their Ministry in these words and no other, *vid. Act. of unif.* I, A, B do here declare my unfeigned assent, and consent, to all and every thing contained and prescribed in, and by the book entituled the book of *Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church,* according to the use of the Church of England, together with the *Psalter or Psalms of David,* pointed as they are to be sung or said in Churches; and the form or manner of making, ordaining, and consecrating of Bishops, Priest and Deacons. It is said in excuse of this imposition, that it is only a consent to the use, not an approbation of the truth, and goodness, of all contained in the book, because the words immediate foregoing are, that Ministers should declare their unfeigned assent and consent to the use of all things in that book contained and prescribed. Be it so, and that the words Assent and Consent signifie the same thing after the manner of Lawyers, though some doubt it, and those words to the use, &c. are not expressed in the form of a Declaration, which they ought to have been; yet we must observe. First, That this was a further alteration of the Case of Conformity, to make it more in-tollerable, Q. *Eliz.* Act of Uniformity, only required that Ministers should be bound to read the book of Common Prayer, and no other Liturgies or forms of prayer in publick: The Canons went further, and did require they should subscribe at their Ordination before the Bishop, that the book of Common Prayer and of Ordination hath nothing in it contrary to the word of God, that it may be lawfully used, and that he himself will use that, and no other; but this

this new Declaration is to be made publicly before the Congregation on forfeiture of their Ministry and place, that so there may be no favour shewed to any. Also it requireth unfeigned Assent and Consent, which cannot mean less than an hearty approbation of the use of what is enjoined, which is much more than barely to judge that nothing is contrary to Gods word, and that they may be Lawfully used. This Assent and Consent is to be made to all, and every thing contained in, and prescribed by the book of Common Prayer, &c. and then the particulars are specified, *viz* : the Prayers, the Administration of Sacraments, and of other Rites and Ceremonies, and the book of ordering Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, and the Psalter or Psalms of *David*, as they use to be said in the Church of *England*. Here is nothing omitted of all those things the Non-Conformists used to object against, some as unlawfull, and others as inconvenient, and not for edification, yet now they must from their hearts allow the use of them each one in particular, not omitting the corrupt translation of the Psalms, contradicted by our own allowed Bibles, which how they could do, who long contended that many of these things ought to be reformed, let all that have Conscience judg. The Non-Conformists think no form of words could have been contrived more spitefully either to keep them from conforming, or to make them lay waste their Consciences, if they did conform, besides that, they know from the mouths of the compilers, that they did design it for these ends, that they might either root out every branch of Conformity out of mens judgments, or every Non-Conformist out of the Church.

4. The Act requires this Assent and Consent, not only of all that should hereafter enter the Ministry, but of all those likewise that were already Ministers, and were either Pastours or Lecturers in any Congregation, and this Declaration to be made together with the subscription hereafter to be mentioned by a certain day, *viz*, before the 24th of *August*, *Anno* 1662, whereas it is generally known that the book of Common Prayer came not out of the press abroad, till within two or three days of that said 24th of *August*, so that it was impossible that it should be seen, much more that it should be considered by half the Ministers in *England* before that day, and those that were resolved to keep their Places, did a great part of them subscribe before they had read the book; which practise doth manifest a further design to root out all that made any Conscience of what they said or subscribed, seeing they must doe

it without consideration, or loose their places; however to devise and impose new Terms of Communion upon men, that are in the quiet possession and practice of their ministry is very unjust and contrary to all peace; and by this practise men shall never be at quiet, for though they have conform'd to all things enjoy'd, they know not how soon a prevailing faction will enjoyn them more, nor what that will be, especially the things enjoy'd in the Declaration and Subscription being such as was known before hand, many of the Ministers in place could not subscribe to, with safe Consciences. It is apparent that their design was, not the peace of the Church, but to remove them out of the Church.

5. It is further required, that all should have Episcopal Ordination, who should in any sort exercise the Ministry, had this concerned only those that should thereafter come to be ordained, it had been more tolerable (though it would have been contrary to *Q. Eliz.*

An. Eliz. 13. moderation, and reflecting upon all other reformed Churches, who have not Episcopal Ordination, and yet do receive and permit our Ministers among them that are Episcopally ordained,) but to impose upon them that were Ministers already, and had performed all offices as Ministers many years, and many of them with good success, and who could not, if they would be ordained by Bishops for near twenty years before, there being also no Law or Canon, requiring all the Ministers of the Church of *England* to be ordained by a Bishop as necessary to their Ministry. I say, now to impose upon these men, that they must leave their places or be ordained by the Bishop, was purposely to cast a stumbling block before them not easily to be passed over, for hereby they must acknowledge Pres-

Wid. Blandel judgment and practise of all Ages and Churches, and particularly of our own till this time, and also
Apol. C. 2. and acknowledge themselves all this while, to have been
and Masons no Ministers, and their Baptism to be no Baptism,
vind: of the unless Lay-men may Baptize which is contrary to
Ordin. of Ref. the Common Prayer book reformed by *K. James*
Churches. in that point, who could do this that have not con-
 signed over their Conscience to the will of men?

6. The A& further requires that all Ministers, whether ordained or to be ordained, should before the Ordinary make this following subscription. *I. A. B. do declare that it is not Lawfull up-*

on any pretence whatsoever to take arms against the King, and that I do abhor that trayterous position of taking Arms by his authority against his Person, or against those that are Commissioned by him, and that I will conform to the Liturgy of the Church of England, as it is now by Law established, and I do declare that I do hold, there lies no Obligation upon me, or any other person, from the Oath commonly called the Solemn League and Covenant, to endeavour any change or alteration of Government either in Church or State, and that the same was in itself an Unlawfull Oath, and imposed upon the Subjects of this Realm, against the known Laws and Liberties of this Kingdom. The two first clauses of this subscription are merely civil, concerning Civil Government, and some circumstances of that Government, not the substance of it, and things greatly controverted amongst Lawyers and Statesmen. Now to impose such things upon Ministers of the Gospel, that belong not to their office to know, much less to determine is very unreasonable, and to impose things concerning secular affairs, as Conditions or Terms of being ordained Ministers of the Gospel, is a great usurpation on the Authority of Christ, as if he must not have Ministers in his Church, unless they engage at the same time to serve the particular ends of a State. Besides, the first clause, viz, *That it is unlawfull to take up Arms against the King upon any pretence whatsoever*, is doubtfull in the sence, viz, whether it respect the Law of the Land, or the Law of God, and therefore cannot with good Conscience be subscribed. And if it be meant of the Law of God, it is against the judgment of the best Lawyers, as well as of the best Divines, it hath no tolerable proof from Scripture. They that abuse the 13th to the Romans, to that purpose, forget or are ignorant, that Nero whom they say the Apostle meant, was adjudged a publick Enemy of the Senate of Rome, and sentenced to dye: it is therefore a most unreasonable thing that this should be imposed to be subscribed by all young men entring into the Ministry, which may by the Canons be at the Age of 24 years, (and by practise seldom exceeds) before they can be fit to judge of such points.

The second clause, viz. *I abhorre*, &c. in its full extent is against the known Lawes and practise of the Land, in divers instances given by others, and practised in several Causes, in his now Majesties Reign; And must Ministers be turned out, and be debarred of the Ministry unless they will wound, their own and their Countreys Rights and liberties, and that for the most part before they understand

stand what they doe? Moreover that the true meaning of these two clauses is a snare to the people, and dangerous to their Rights and Priviledges (contrary to all the lax interpretations devised by some) appeareth beyond contradiction, by the sence that the House of Peers gave of them, both the words, and design of imposing, when they so vigorously opposed its being made a Test for all Parliament men in all future Ages. And let it be remembred that these were the Law-makers, and most of them persons concerned in making this Law, therefore best knew the meaning of those passages, and also had Authority to declare the sence of them, and were yet sitting in that same Parliament, that made the law.

The third clause in this subscription is, *I will conform to the Liturgy of the Church of England*; This was to oblige the young Fellows of Colledges, and Tutors in the Universities, before they came to give Assent and Consent, and to be a double cord upon the Ministry. But many who could silently conform, cannot solemnly subscribe a promise to conform, whereby they pre-engage themselves against all change of their judgments.

The fourth clause is, *That I hold that there lies no obligation on me from the Covenant, nor upon any other that took it, to endeavour any alteration in Government in Church or State.* There is scarce a parallel in all History to this, That a man should be compell'd to swear for others, that they are not obliged by an Oath that they took; The imposers might as well have said, we will make you swear to any thing we please, or else you shall not continue in the Church: But the Non-conformists desire to be satisfied, how the King (to pass by all others) who swore to prosecute the ends of the Covenant in a most Publick and solemn manner, and that before he had sworn to maintain Episcopacy, and agreed to take it upon mature deliberation and advice, and that at *Breda* when he was under no fear or constraint, how he should not be bound to the Reformation he then promised, and what man can absolve him from that Oath, especially an *English* Parliament, when that Oath was made to the *Stors*; it being an unquestionable rule, That none can release another from a lawful Oath, but those to whom the Oath was made, and into whose power the Jurer hath put himself by that Oath, This ought to have been first cleared, and not rigorously imposed.

Lastly, It must be subscribed, That the Covenant in it self was an unlawful Oath, which the Non-conformists disallowing, our
English

English Prelacy can by no means assent to ; And that it was imposed against the known Lawes and Liberties of this land, which few Ministers have law enough to know, and therefore it ought not to be made a condition of the Ministry to subscribe it.

The Non-conformists find that this Act is wholly contrived to make them disown and disparage that Reformation which they had been engaged in for twenty year, and to make themselves transgressors, to reproach their Brethren that were dead, to disparage all the Providences of God in their behalf, and to villifie the success of their own Ministry, and the growth of Religion and Sobriety in the Nation which they had seen, and been instruments of, and moreover to engage them against all endeavor of Reformation for the future, and all those principles which their pious Predecessors had delivered to them, And therefore they think he that can do this is a servant of men and not of Christ.

They do not justifie all proceedings in the endeavours for Reformation, never any such thing was attempted without many infirmities in the best, and transvers designs in selfish men. There were never more Heresies, Schismes, and Superstitions in the Church, then were in the Apostles dayes, and those that immediately succeeded, proportionable to the number of Christians, the Gospel being then but setting up in the world ; But the Reformation it self being good and necessary, and the effects of it as to Religion manifest they cannot revile or renounce, without condemning those principles, which animated them to bring in the King, without regard of their own personal peace, or interest : It is said *that* Reformation wanted Authority, it did so, such as should make it National, but every Congregation hath Authority from Christ to reform themselves, and Rulers ought to protect them in it, and not to trouble them for it, or force them from it.

C H A P. VI.

The Judgment and Practise of the present Non-conformists concerning Communion with, and Separation from the Church of England.

HAVING given the Principle Reasons why many Ministers both formerly, and in this present Age cannot conform, *i. e.* approve and

and subscribe to the *Liturgy* of the Church of *England*, as it contains all things belonging to Publick Worship. It is needful that we set down what are their thoughts concerning their present case, and what their practise ought to be in reference to the Church of *England*, that their friends may not mistake, and think they maintain principles of Anarchy and Confusion (which if they did they would long since have come to nought) and that their ill-willers may not have opportunity to slander them, by misrepresenting them as enemies to all Government, and as inconsistent with themselves, as this Dr. hath done. Therefore,

1. The Non conformists conceive the case betwixt them and the Conformists Clergy to be much the same as betwixt the *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* in *Germany*, or betwixt the *Papists* and *Protestants*, since the Council of *Trent*, i. e. differences are come to the highest extremity under blood, (and that only, because it is not in Clergy mens power,) and are utterly irreconcilable. The *Lutherans* formerly had some men amongst them of some moderation, and the things in question betwixt them and the *Calvinists* were disputed and debated, and men left to their liberty both in judgment and practice, but when they got strength enough, then they imposed their subscriptions, deposed and imprissoned the *Calvinists*, enveighed against them with all bitterness, will admit of no treaties of Reconciliation, and finally are so obstinately fixed in their own way, as that they will much rather go three steps backwards to *Rome*, then come one forwards toward the *Calvinists*; the *Papists* also though they earnestly opposed the Reformation, yet they maintained disputes and debates, held conferences and consultations with our first Reformers, and forbore violence (at least by means of the Princes,) a good while, so that there was hopes the Church might have been reformed without any fatal breach, *Charles 5th* then Emperour, and *Francis* the 1st K. of *France*, and others earnestly endeavouring to bring it about, but when after all, the Council that had been desired on both sides met at *Trent*, and excluded the Protestants from voting amongst them, and established all the errors and corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, which the Protestants condemned, and cursed all the Doctrines and Practises of the Protestants, point by point, that they should have heard and examined. And finally, ordered all that should be ordained to the Ministry to subscribe to this Council; There was now no more hope of Reformation of the Church, or of pacification betwixt dissenting parties. Thus the Non-conformists being of the same date with the Conformists

mists, Bishop Hooper, Bish. Coverdale, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Bradford, with others of the first Reformers, being dissatisfied with the established *Liturgy*, and still more and more successively in after Ages, were at first treated like brethren, and though the *Liturgy* was established by Law, by K. *Edw.* and Q. *Eliz.* yet they required not subscriptions to it, or approbation of it, being content with a silent praise of what was enjoined, and very frequently passed over with silence, the omission or non-praise of the Ceremonies, and other things enjoined, till Arch-Bishop *Whitgifts* dayes; all which time the Non-conformists had still hopes things might have been accommodated, and they applied themselves to Princes and Parliaments to that end.

At length the Canons in 1605 made by the whole Convocation (but with as fair play as those at *Trent*) and ratified by the King, established all things that the Non-conformists complained of, and that not in the gross, but point by point, and fortified them with the Censures of the Church against all Dissenters, and finally required all Ministers to approve the *Liturgy* by subscription. Whereupon many were turned out at present, and many kept from the Ministry, nevertheless these subscriptions were private before the Bishops and Ordinaries, who might and did frequently either omit, the subscription, or qualify it, with such interpretations, that many who were in their Judgments Nonconformists, could and did still get into and continue in places, and those who were driven out of one Diocese, were frequently suffered to preach in another, and they who could not be ordained by Bishops would procure Ordination in other Protestant Countreys; so that here was a little alleviation. There was also one ground of hope left, *viz.* these Canons were not Law, another King, yea, the same that approved them, might have altered them, and therefore the Non-conformists stretched their patience to the utmost, hoping that at last their afflictions might be looked on by them that had power to remedy them, and some appearance of it there was under the long Parliament, especially when the King and they were upon terms of pacification, But behold the Conclusion, We have at length the private subscription to the Common prayer Book turned into a Publick solemn Declaration in the Congregation. and that in prescript form of words, that there may be no moderation, And this to extend to the unseigned approbation of the use of every thing contained in the Book. And these Episcopal Canons turned into a standing law, which equally extends to all parts of the Realm, and to all times and ages successively, as much as

men can oblige them, so that there can easily be no alteration. And besides all this they must not only approve the Liturgy, but they must renounce and disown all their own and their Brethrens former endeavours for Reformation, and engage themselves never to endeavour reformation again, and whereas formerly they who by the Canons were made incapable of Livings. were nevertheless permitted to preach Lectures, and might sometimes administer the Sacraments, Tis now enjoyned that no man shall preach, or read any Lecture, unless he hath first made the fore-named Declaration and Subscription upon pain of enduring Three Months imprisonment in the Common-Goal, and besides that, to pay an Hundred Pounds if he presume to administer the Lords Supper *toties quoties*. Also the former Non-Conformists were wont to teach School, at least privately for the subsistence of their Families, and that they might be of some use. But now none must keep a publick or private School without subscribing against endeavours of Reformation, and promising to conform to the Liturgy. And all these impositions are extended also to the University Collegiate Churches, Hospitals, that so there should be no retirement for a Non-Conformist, as formerly some have had in such places, and that by pre-engaging the Youth before they understand what they do, there might be no new Non-Conformists to spring up hereafter, finally when by these means they had turned out about Two Thousand Ministers out of Livings, and Fellows of Colledges out of the Universities, and bolted the door after them, that they could never return into either, and all this was born with patience.

The Bishops procured another Act *Anno 1665*, to drive them out of all Towns, where they might have any Society or Comfort, unless they would subscribe and swear a Declaration to the same purpose with the former subscription, and mostly in the same Language; and we add to all this, that these Declarations and Subscriptions were at the same time imposed upon the Ministers of *Ireland*, and *Scotland*, though Presbyterial-Government and Discipline was there established by Law, and their Constitution by the first Reformation, that so there might be no relief, no retreat from one Kingdom to another, and that the Principles of Non-conformity might be Rooted out of all-together, from hence I say it is manifest that nothing would satisfy the Conformists but the Ruine of the Non-Conformists then Living, and the extirpation of their Principles, out of these Kingdoms for ever. And all this being settled by Law, there

there is no place for the moderation of any particular men, either Bishops towards the Non-Conformists, nor of Non-Conformists themselves that could go a great way towards Conformity, if they could not do all that was enjoyed. therefore the breach is irreconcilable, and not to be made up, unless God incline King and Parliament to take away these bones of Contention.

2. Nothing therefore now remains for the Non-Conformists, but that either they set still as private men, and dye in silence, or else that they exercise their Ministry against the Law, and to Congregations distinct from the Parish Churches.

The *Dr* would persuade them to do the former, and that they sin against their own Principles and Consciences, if they do the latter. But he must give us leave to declare our own Principles, and then we are ready to hear what consequences he can draw from them against our practise.

The Non-Conformists own these Principles as to the matter in hand.

1. That their ejection out of their Livings and Ministry was very unjust, both in the thing it self, they having not deserved it of the Church or State, and in the manner of proceeding, they being ejected not for any error in Doctrine, or offence in manners, but only Terms were devised, which their Opposites knew, they could not submit to, and imposed on them on purpose to turn them out of their Ministry for refusing them.

2. They are satisfied that the turning out of so great a number of pious and diligent Ministers at once, was a very great prejudice to the Church of God at home, Prophanes, Popery, Atheism, and all that is evil presently breaking in upon her as a flood, and a great scandal to the Churches abroad, to see their Brethren of the same principles so dealt with by Protestants, for no other reason but for holding and endeavouring the same things, that all reformed Churches generally do.

3. Being unjustly ejected, they are satisfied that they have neither forfeited their Ministry, and therefore ought not to lay it down nor lost their right to their people and Congregations any more than a Civil Magistrate driven out by an Usurper, and excluded by Laws, looses his Native Right to his People and Government.

4. The people greatly wanting their Ministry, they are satisfied that as they have a right to their Congregations, so they ought to

make use of it for the peoples good, where they desire it, and will accept it.

5. They also believe that Ministers having not given any just occasion for their ejection, the People ought to stick to them, and to oppose any that shall come in their room, on the account of this Act as Intruders and Usurpers, unless special reasons alter the case in some places, and as to some persons. Thus the Orthodox generally did when turned out by *Arian* Emperours, and *Arians* sent in their room, the Ministers cleaved to their people, and the people to them: The cause alters not the case here, they did it against Law, and that which warranted them, will warrant our Non-Conformists with advantage.

6. They believe that those Congregations thus deprived of their Ministers, may chuse other Non-conformists if they cannot have their own, or may chuse others in their room after they are dead, and that they ought to do so, unless in singular cases, because else they loose their undoubted priviledge of choosing their Ministers, and lay themselves open to a perpetual usurpation, to have their Ministers torn from them, and others imposed on them at the pleasure of Superiours, and also they do at least tacitly consent to, and approve of this ejection of their Ministers, subversion of Reformation, and establishment of Conformity for ever.

7. They believe that the people of *England* having been generally engaged to, and active for reformation with the Non-Conformists, and against Conformity less then is now established, and having felt the benefit of it, are obliged each one in their place to oppose and testify against this rigorous Conformity, and not to submit to it, and that otherwise they disown their own former works, and their Ministers, and give themselves and their liberties in Church matters, and their Consciences all-together into the hands of Church Usurpers, when ever they can prevail with the Civil Magistrate to joyn with them.

8. And that therefore the people who are sensible of this great Usurpation, and of the great blow given to the Church by it, and how just the cause of the Non-Conformists is, ought on these accounts to own both them and their ministry, as there is occasion, though they never were their proper Pastours, for the Communion of Saints extendeth to owning of their sufferings and themselves in them, when they are for the same general or more particular cause.

5. They

9. They are sure that the Ministers and Peoples adhering to each other in such a case is agreeable to Scripture, which makes Ministers the sole Governours of the Church, as it is a spiritual Common-Wealth under Christ, and gives the people the sole power of gathering themselves into Congregations for their own best edification, and to chuse their own Ministers.

10. And they are sure that the practise is agreeable to the practise of the Universal Church both before and after they were under Christian Magistrates, till the Pope at once wrested from the Magistrates their supream power in their Dominions, and from the Churches all their authority of Governing themselves, and as the ruine of Religion followed thereupon in the Church, all things being disposed of by the Lusts of the Bishop of *Rome*, so there would be no way to prevent the like, should all be left to the wills of the Civil Magistrate, or a few Church men that guide and influence him.

11. As a people under Usurpers in their Civil-Rights may and ought to provide what they can for their own liberties and safety, till they can recover their ancient privileges and rightfull Governours, still doing nothing against the publick good, so they think the people of *England* being under great usurpation and oppression in Ecclesiastical Government, are bound to provide the best they can for their own Souls, and the Principle Ends of a Church, till Right and Truth may take place, still having respect to the general good and peace of the Church.

Upon these principles many Non-conformists still keep to their own Congregations, some gather new ones, and become Pastors to them, and some preach to Assemblies of people, that voluntarily come to hear them, without taking full pastoral charge of them; yet all maintain a brotherly communion with the Parishes and Ministers of the Church of *England*, not forbidding their people to hear and own them as brethren, and occasionally at least, to hold Communion with them in all things that are not against their Consciences. Now if from these principles, or this practise the Dr. can convince the Non-conformists of Schisme, or sinful seperation or allowing that in the people which they are not satisfied in themselves, They would gladly accept his endeavours herein, but will not be concerned with such that have sold their Consciences to get a poor livelihood, by defending what ever the Rulers say or do.

C H A P. VII.

An Answer to some passages in the Drs Sermon, tending to prove the Non-conformists Preaching to be Schisme by their own Principles.

WE will now briefly consider what the Dr. Rhetorically insinuates, rather than argues against the Non conformists preaching in private, though they are driven out of the Churches.

1. To object That they acknowledge the Church of *England* to be true in Doctrine, Sacraments and Worship.

Serm. p. 21. 2. That the Parishes of *England*, at least some of them are true Churches.

3. That it is lawful to hold Communion with them sometimes, and upon occasion.

Ans. 1. All this will prove no more than that the Non conformists ought not to unchurch the Parishes of *England*, or to account their Ministers and Sacraments Null, or to disown the people to be their brethren, as some of the *Brownists* are said to do.

2. The Dr hath given much occasion in his Writings, to many to think, that he granteth as much of the Church of *Rome* as he here saith, the Non-conformists do, of the Church of *England*, viz. that it is true in Doctrine, Sacraments, and Worship, that the Parishes are true Churches, and that it is simply lawful to hold occasional communion with them, for they have the true Doctrine, Sacraments and worship, for the substantials of them, though defaced in circumstances and many corruptions added to them, yet he will not say that it was not lawful, yea necessary to break off from her, and to oppose her.

3. The question betwixt the Dr. and the Non-conformists is whether the Non-conforming Ministers and people are bound silently to bear the usurpation of the Bishops over them, in imposing unlawful and un-necessary things upon them, and casting them out of the Church for non submission, and not rather, both to assert their own Rights and Priviledges against such usurpation? The Parishes being true Churches, and occasional communion in unquestionable things

things being lawful, is nothing to this purpose. And if the Non-conformists are more charitable and fair towards the Conformists (who are the great Schisme makers, by their rigorous impositions of things they confesse unnecessary) than the Conformists are to them, who are passive in the breach, and yet they will hold no Communion with them; They think this should not be made an argument against themselves.

Serm. p. 30. 4. The Dr. hath cited a pertinent example, though he thought to anticipate us in it. The people of *Constantinople* he saith when *Chrysostome* their Bishop was thrust out and banished for doing his duty, and *Asacius* imposed on them in his room, refused to joyn with him; This is the Non-conformists case. But saith he, when *Atticus* restored *Chrysostom's* name to the Dipticks of the Church, then they returned to their ancient Communion, and *Chrysostom* advized them to it. And when the Bishops will acknowledge as *Atticus* here did, that the Non-conformists were wronged, and those that were put in their places were intruders, and consequently take off the yoke of Conformity, then they will do as the people of *Constantinople* did, till then this example justifies the Non-conformists.

5. Though the Non-conformists allow Parish Congregations, and the Parishes of *England* not to be disowned on that account, from being true Churches, yet the Dr. knows, that those very men whom he quotes as most complying with him, do deny those Parishes to be true Organical Churches, whose Ministers have not power of Governing their people, or ought for their Doctrines and lives to be expelled the Ministry:

6. The Non-conformists do not say, it is lawful to hold occasional Communion in all things with the Parishes, but only in the substantial of worship; nor with all Parishes, but with those only where they may joyn with some edification. And because wise and learned men can distinguish the good from the evil, they may joyn with many Ministers occasionally when the people may not, for fear of their errors or because of their railing and reproaches of their brethren or Godliness, by which this people will either be infected or disturbed, so that they can receive no benefit.

2. The Dr. Argues, If occasional Communion be Lawful, it is hard to understand that constant Communion should not be a Duty.

Answer. I allow him to mean amongst us who were once fellow Members of the same Parishes, else his words have no force.

But

But the Non-Conformists allow of Occasional Communion to maintain Love and Peace amongst the People, and Ministers that are peaceable, and to shew that they do not esteem the Impositions of the Church of *England* to be of so high a Nature as the Corruptions of *Rome*, and that they should break off all Communion from them. But if the ejected Ministers have still aright to their people, and the people to them, and both are bound to oppose in their places the Uniformity imposed with such Circumstances as it is, and as they maintain; it will not at all follow that from occasional Brotherly Communion, they must become constant Members of the Parishes, and be content with their Communion.

3. The Dr. frequently hints Authority and Government to which we must be subject, and therefore if they eject Ministers, they must become Lay-men, and not Preach, In this he speaks sometimes of the Authority of the Church, and sometimes of the Civil Magistrate.

Ans. And because this is a snare to many mens Consciences, We answer freely.

1. That the Authority of the Church of *England* as a Church hath no Obligation on the Consciences of Non-Conformists any further then prudence and peace doth direct them; for the Bishops, Deans, &c. which are the Rulers of it, supposing them Lawful, yet being no way chosen by the People or Inferiour Clergy, can have no Lawful Ecclesiastical Authority over this Church, especially being alwaies protested against by a considerable part of the Ministers and People; nor can the Lyturgy, or any thing else they impose oblige the Ministers and People, being not advized with in such Impositions, nor heard speak for themselves. Two Thousand Ministers as Orthodox diligent learned, and every way considerable, as their Opposites, and pleading for no other things then many such Ministers have pleaded for, from the beginning of our Reformation, are not therefore bound in Conscience to submit to the Wills of the Bishops, because they prevailed with the Civil Power to establish their Opinion.

2. The Civil Magistrate hath Power to maintain and protect the Church, and to see that she doth her Duty, but to impose forms of Worship on her, without the advice, and against the consent of those who are most concern'd: He hath no power given him of God; much less to infringe her Priviledges and Liberties, to rend away her Pastors at pleasure, or to impose whom he please on her, and

and the like; And where there is no Authority to command, that command cannot oblige to obedience: Indeed where small things are enjoined that are not sinful, men may obey, if prudential Reasons lead them to it; But if small things will usher in great ones, and obedience will make way for more imposition. It was the Apostles Judgment in a like case concerning the practise of the Jewish Ceremonies, that such Imposers should be resisted. *Gal. 2. 11, 12.*

Should our King of himself impose a Tax of a Farthing Pole, would not many suspect, it might if peaceably paid, make way for greater Taxes, and so undermine their Liberties in Parliament? Why should not men be as jealous of the Liberties and Priviledges of the Church, which concern the Honour of Christ, and their own Souls good, especially knowing that the *Western* Church was ruined and defaced by the Pope, meerly by yielding and patient bearing of gradual Impositions and encroachments in the better sort; and the worser sort complying, and crying for Obedience to the Authority of the Church and Governours.

Serm. p. 19. 4. The Dr. saith that we confess the case of the people is very different from that of the Ministers, and therefore that they run into Schism in hearing us, though we for some Sinister ends will not tell them of their error.

Ans. Interest and passion will not suffer men to speak of such things as they are concerned in, without uncharitable and un-scholar like reflections sometimes, which I will pity, rather then retort; And to the thing, we answer, That the Peoples case is indeed much different from the Ministers, as to Active Conformity, *i. e.* They are not to Assent or Consent to all in the Service Book, nor to subscribe as the Ministers must, in order to their holding Communion, but passively the people are concerned as far as the Ministers, *i. e.* They are to suffer all these things; Their Ministers to be cast out, and all Impositions which they and their Fathers groaned under, to be enjoined with the greatest rigour, and not shew their dislike of any of them, upon pain of being accounted Schismatics, according to the 27 *Canon*. So that the people are as much wronged, and imposed on in their Capacities, as the Ministers are in theirs; We grant that the People may hear and see those things done in Divine Service, and so may Ministers also as private men, which conscientious Ministers ought not to be active in. As our Saviour was present at the Temple Worship, though there were many Superstitions mixed by the Priests in those days, but what men may do in some cases,

cases, they are not obliged to do in all cases, and people cannot be obliged to suffer any sinfull or doubtfull things in the worship they joyn in, unless there be some great reason why they may not forsake that worship; Now the Non-Conformists affirm that the people are obliged in their capacities to endeavour reformation of things amiss in the Church, and to own that Reformation they had obtained, and to withstand the unjust intolerable imposition of the last uniformity, as much as the Ministers are to do; all these in their places. And therefore as it is no Schism for the Ministers to preach, so neither is it any for the people to hear. That we may plainly express the sence of the Non-Conformists in this point, and that the *Dr* may no more mistake their Principles, and so labour in vain to convince them. They say as *Harnbeck* adviseth the *Cabornist*: in reference to the *Lutherans*. That good and peaceable men of each party should love each other, and hold as much Brotherly Communion together as may be, but no more to endeavour any publick Reconciliation or Union, which the Heads and Leaders of the party have so often frustrated and opposed, till God will give them a more Moderate Spirit, and some fit reason may incline them to Union. The Question betwixt them and the *Dr* plainly is.

1. Whether a multitude of Ministers being turned out of the Church to her great and apparent damage, without so much as alledging any Crime against them, but only imposing new things on them, on purpose to ensnare them, whether these Ministers are bound to lay down their Ministry and live private, and not rather to assert their own and the Churches Rights?

2. Whether the People thus wrongfully deprived of their Ministers, and imposed upon also, against their own Judgments and Conscience, in matters of Divine worship, whether they are bound to submit to the Intruders and Imposers, and not rather to joyn with their injured Ministers, in asserting their own priviledges? The *Dr's* candour is too great to deny, that the reason of Scripture and the practise of the best antiquity, before the Churches lost their just liberty, is on the Non-Conformists side in these points.

3. Whether the Non-Conformists both Ministers and People are not greatly strengthened both in their Non-Conformity to the Liturgy, and also in their practise of holding Communion, together for self preservation, by what hath followed in an uninterrupted course, ever since the ejection of Ministers, *viz*, the horrible and general contempt of Religion, general corruption of manners,

great

great neglect of preaching to the people, most Dignitaries having many Parishes in their hands, which they supply by ignorant boys; the great growth of Popery, with a certain and manifest design of bringing it into the Land again, if his Majesty who now letteth were taken out of the way, the great corruption of Doctrine as well as manners in our own Clergy, neither of which are minded by the Rulers of our Church, so as man be conformable; that it is now in the Church of *England*, as in that of *Rome*, men may be of any opinion, live in any vice, or be of no Religion, so they own the Pope and his Church, and be no Protestants; so here men may be Arminian, Socinian, Papists, Atheists, and what they will so they externally conform to the Lyturgy, and be no Presbyterians, so that it is now manifest, that nothing was intended by the contrivers of the Act of Uniformity, but to cast out of the Ministry those whom they knew could not then conform, and for ever to keep out, and intangle the most understanding and conscientious men, and to let none into the Church, who should scruple any of her commands or practices. Are such things any motives to the Non-Conformists after 18 years suffering all the indignities and injuries that *Julian's* wit and malice thought fit to lay upon the Christians of his time, and supposed them more intollerable to them then present death, which would have been both honourable, and an end of their miseries. I say are these things motives, that at last they should condemn their former practice, and without any relaxation quietly take all the Burthen on their Shoulders? no, they are satisfied that whereas the Church of *England* hath given her self a mortal wound by her Act of Uniformity, and hath layn bleeding of it ever since almost to death, that they ought not to hasten her death, by putting their hands and adding their helps to it.

5. The Dr. thinks that Ministers are not now so indispensibly bound preach as the Apostles were, who were immediately sent by God, and Authorized by Miracles, and therefore they must cease preaching if forbidden by the Magistrate, justly or unjustly.

Ans. There is the same necessity of the Ministry to preserve, build up, and continue the Church, by adding new Members through the preaching of the word, as there was of the Apostles to lay the foundation of the Church, and therefore there lay's the same necessity upon every Minister to preach to his flock within his Compass, as did on the Apostles in their Compass. May Civil Magistrates be resisted, or deposed, by the people upon any pretence, and they

they not seek redress, because they are not anointed; and immediately sent by God as *Saul* and *David*, &c. were; if the standing order of Magistracy hath its immutable warrant, and unalterable priviledges to enable it, for the discharge of that office; surely the standing and ordinary Ministry hath as much warrant and provision for the execution of their office without expecting Miracles to give them new Authority.

Serm. p. 36. 6. The Dr. saith the Assembly of Divines gave many weighty Reasons against Toleration, and were for Uniformity as much as the Church of *England*, So that, that Church is justified by them from all Tyranny in exacting Uniformity; and the question is not, whether there shall be a Uniformity, but who shall have the ordering of it.

Ans. The present Non-conformists have opposed Toleration of all Sects and Opinions, as much as the Assembly, but this charge is a great injury both to the Assembly and to the Nonconformists now living; for the Assembly never desired Uniformity in the same words of Prayer, and all Divine Offices, or in Rites and Ceremonies devised by men that might occasion scruple to any, nor do their reasons tend to any such thing, but only that men should not have liberty to withdraw from their Parishes upon every pretence, and to constitute new Congregations. The present Non-conformists desire no Uniformity but in Doctrine and the substantial of worship, Discipline and Government, leaving the wording and methoding of worship to particular mens prudence, and the necessities of their people, and leaving all Congregations to their liberties in Rites and Ceremonies, not instituted by Christ; supposing that Physicians may as well be tied to the same rules in administering Physick to all bodies; as Ministers and people be obliged to the same words, and things, universally for their souls.

[Let the late Act of Uniformity be abolished, the Apocryphal books and Holidayes be left out of the *Lyturgy*, and the Psalms read in the new Translation; let the Cross and Surplice be taken away, and kneeling at the Sacrament be left indifferent, according to the discretion of Ministers, and the desires of the people; also let Parents stipulate for their own children, and some few things in the Prayers be altered, or so explained, that they may give no offence; let the book of Consecration of Bishops, &c. be restored as it was in Queen *Elizabeths* dayes, and Ministers be bound only in general words to a peaceable submission to the *Lyturgy* & let them subscribe

to the 39 Articles only in Doctrines of faith and Sacraments, according to the Statute *Eliz.* 13. and this will make much more for Union than any thing the Dr. or his brethren have yet said.]

Serm. p. 11, 12. But the Dr. saith *Phil.* 3. 16. Commands all to walk by the same Rule, *viz.* the Rule of Uniformity formerly given them, when the Apostle was with them, as they were wont to do in all the Churches.

Be it so, but did the Apostle intend any more than that they should be content with the same substantial of worship which were for common edification, wherein all might and ought to agree without contending about the Ceremonies of the Law, or particular opinions, which some out of weakness might be zealous for, and others that were more perfect knew were abolished. This seems to be the plain meaning of the Text; for both the perfect and the imperfect, and otherwise minded, were all to agree in the praise of this Rule, which therefore could not be the imposition or limitation of disputable Doctrines, or questionable Rites and Ceremonies, but he would prove that this Uniformity was in Rites and Ceremonies from *1 Cor.* 7. 17. because some things the Apostle ordained in all Churches; but the Text speaks only of the Co-habitation of Husbands and wives, when one was an Infidel, *ver.* 15, 16. Was this a Ceremony? In *1 Cor.* 11. 34. The Apostle abolisheth the custom of Love-feasts before the Lords Supper, because it was abused, and was of necessity; what then? *Ergo*, he ordained Uniformity of Ceremonies. The Apostle adds, *the rest will I set in order when I come*, i. e. *other disorders among them the Apostle would regulate*; And there is no way to reform abuses in the Church, but by imposing un-necessary Ceremonies?

He saith *Pag.* 13. That the Apostles gave Rules concerning Rites and Customes, wherein there was doubt and scruple.

Ans. But what were they? To impose Rites upon men who scruple the lawfulness of them? if so, the people might have took their word (who were infallible) what Rites were lawful, and what not; but no Church Governors have that Authority now, but on the contrary, the Apostles forbade those who were zealous for Ceremonies, to impose them upon others, and commanded those who knew their liberty in such Ceremonies, not to use their liberty to the offence or disturbance of those who contended for them.

In a word, The Apostles commanded that every man should

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use his own judgment, and liberty in things indifferent, privately and peaceably without imposing upon, or censuring each other; and that all things should be done for edifying, *Rom. 14. per totum*; and this is directly against the Uniformity of Ceremonies, or the imposing of any uncommanded Ceremony upon the Church, without apparent necessity, general consent, and a prospect of edification to arise thereby.

Thus we have exonerated our Consciences of the guilt of Schism, at least voluntary, and against our knowledge. Let the Dr. seriously look to his Conscience, for charging us with Schism, or sinful Separation against our own professed principles, before the Judges of the Land, and the chief Magistrates of *London*, without any proof, and at a time when he knoweth the Papists hope to devour us and our Religion, by turning the Magistrates sword, and opening the peoples mouths against the Non-conformists.

P A R T

P A R T II.

C A P. I.

The Non-Conformists no Friends to General Toleration ; An Answer to the first Argument from the Honour and Authority of our first Reformers.

I Come now to consider what the Dr. hath further said in his large defence of his Sermon, to make good the Charge of Schism, or sinful Separation against the Non-Conformists. The Dr. proceeds in an Historical way, and therefore is prolix. I shall according to my first intention (which was to give the Reasons of the Non-Conformists practise in preaching, (though forbidden by Law) proceed to examine what the Dr. hath further said to invalidate those Reasons ; and to vindicate them from such exceptions as he hath made against them, and therefore I shall only take notice of such things as are matter of Argument, which will be reduced to a few heads, and pass by all personal matters, as also his long Preface, and all Reflections on times and persons which are forreign to the Argument in hand. The Dispute being about a matter of practise, and of a publick concern, the only end of writing, should be either to find out the Truth by debateing it calmly, or else if neither side can change the others judgment, yet to produce such probable Reasons for their Opinion and Practise, as may satisfy impartial Men, that they act not from rashness, or for sinister ends, but as becomes Men, that consider conscientiously what they do, and why they do it. But before I come to his first Argument, I think it of great moment to take notice of what he chargeth the Non-Conformists with in general, viz. their approving an universal Toleration

on

Toleration of all Sects and Opinions under the Notion of Liberty of Conscience, which he proves by their accepting Licenses to Preach according to the Kings Proclamation, 1672. to which I answer, We are not to take all that is written by men in distress for their settled Judgment, much less for the Judgment of the whole Party.

The Dr. would think it hard that Bishop *Tailors* Book for Liberty of prophesying, and others of that kind, written by Episcopal men under oppression and restraint, should be charged to be the judgment of the Church of *England*. Toleration and Liberty of Conscience was the brat of *Socinians* and *Libertines* in *Switzerland*, *Poland*, and afterwards fostered by the *Dutch-Arminians*, and was ever detested by the *Non-Conformists*. It is their general sense that they would rather dye in silence and obscurity than Papists, Quakers, and other dangerous Sects should have immunity, under pretence of favour to them: But they were advized to accept of the Licenses granted by that Declaration, because it straitly forbid all their private Meetings, Commanded to set open their Doors, and not to presume to Preach without such Licenses first obtained. They Preached, and did all the same things in private before, which now the Declaration gave them leave to do in publick,, Would it not have been look'd upon as a rude contempt of the Magistrates favour, and a giving a just cause of jealousy to the State, if they had still kept private Meetings, when they are commanded to be publick, and to receive the Magistrates allowance and protection: We never pleaded for Liberty of thinking, writing, speaking, or acting in Religion as every man pleaseth, under the name of the Liberty of Conscience; Conscience is bound to the revealed will of God at its only Rule, and is only to be free where God hath left it free; i. e. in things not clearly revealed, or not commanded by him, either directly, or by just Consequence. We plead for no Liberty but that wherewith Christ hath made us free, that we may not be again intangled in a yoke of Bondage to those things which Christ hath neither commanded, nor given men leave to command, *Gal. 5. 1*. Nor should it have been forgotten that the *Non-Conformists* Friends in the Parliament, were the chief Instruments of recalling that Declaration, which was no sign that the whole Party approved of Toleration. But why do we still Preach? The Reasons are given partly before, and shall be more hereafter. But come we now to the Arguments, the first is this;

§. 1. 2. The terms of Communion are the same now as they were at the first Reformation, and if they were no just ground of Separation then, neither are they now.

Ans. We must Remember the question before us, and the *Dr* proposed to handle in his Sermon, and in his Letter to Mr *Baxter* is barely this, *whether the Non-conformist Ministers ejected by the Act of Uniformity, are bound to sit down as Lay-men in the Parishes they live in, and not to preach or act as Ministers on pain of incurring the guilt of Schism.* This he leaveth and runneth into the large Field of Separation from the Communion of the Church, which is beside the business, for if it were granted that the Non-Conformists were bound to all acts of Communion with the Parishes, when they preach not themselves, as the Non-Resident Conformists are in the places where they live, yet it will not follow from hence, that they must forbear all exercises of their Ministry, and to be content with the Lay-Communion of the Parishes any more then the Non-Residents may plead that they cannot reside with their own people, or perform Ministerial duties to them, because they must hold Communion with them amongst whom they dwell.

Thus the *Dr* in all his book hath said nothing directly to the question in hand, *but the Terms of Communion he saith are the same now as at the first Reformation,* but as to the Ministers, this is apparently otherwise, such Subscriptions and Declarations being required of them as no History can match, except those imposed on the *Jansenists* in *France*, of which ours seem to be an imitation. The contrivers of our impositions being then in *France*, when the *Jansenists* were removed from all Ecclesiastical Places by a like artifice as we afterwards were: If he mean the Terms of Communion that concern the people, as he elsewhere expresseth himself, and restrains them to the Terms imposed by Law, this is nothing to the purpose for the Ministers, though they should submit to those terms when they act as private men, may nevertheless be bound not to forsake the exercise of their Ministry. Besides there is a Fallacy in restraining the Terms to those enjoined by Law; what if neither Ministers nor people can enjoy the benefit of the Law, but new terms are imposed on them without Law, as were the subscription to the Service Book, *Can.* 36. whereby so many worthy Ministers were turned out in *K. James's* time, the Reading of the book for Sports on the Lords Day, and the Reading of the Prayer against the *Scots*, and the order for Preaching but once a Sabbath, and then

not to exceed an hour, for disobeying which more were rejected in the late King's time, and many such are still continued, *viz.* the constant Reading of the Communion Service, though there be no Sacrament, which makes the Prayers more tedious, and fuller of Repitions then they need to be, and also straitness the Preacher, if it do not hinder the Sermon, the placing the Communion Table and Railing it like an Altar, and compelling the Communicants to come up by parcels to kneel before it contrary to *Q. Eliz.* injunctions: must the people submit still, because these things are imposed by Law; do not innovations and corruptions come into the Church by degrees, and by connivance at first; and afterwards when their Authors are strong enough, they are then established by Laws and Canons: And yet the Argument holdeth not, the things imposed might be submitted to at the first Reformation, *ergo* they must be so still.

The Jewish Ceremonies were tolerated and practised by the Apostle *Paul* in the beginning of the Gospel, and yet when false teachers, and other peevish or timorous men contended for the observation of them still, when the reason of it, *viz.* not offending the *Jews* was ceased, and they were an hindrance to the Gospel then the same Apostle would not give place to them, no not for an hour, though *Peter* and *Barnabas* joyued with them, *Gal.* 2. 3. 4. 5. and *ver.* 11. to the 18. Nor doth our practise reflect on our first Reformers, unless they had been extraordinarily inspired to that work, then indeed to vary from them, or endeavour to correct them, would be to reproach the Spirit by whom they acted. But if they made that Reformation only as good and wise men, acting according to Principles of Piety and Prudence, as far as they could in their circumstances, it is no disparagement to them, if others vary from them according to the times and circumstances they live in. My *L. Bacon* observes that in civil mat-

Bacon's Essays, ters our Parliament does dayly alter our Laws, and suit them to the present times and case of the people. yet this is thought no disparagement to the Wisdom or Justice of their Ancestours in former Parliaments, but the Church lieth almost buried in the Rubbish of time, and this must not be removed out of Veneration, forsooth, to Antiquity.

The best men not inspired can but do what is best for their own time, we should therefore inquire not only whether the terms of Communion be the same now, that they were at the first Reformation

tion, but also whether those terms be as necessary as Tolerable, and as fit to be submitted to now as they were then ; Nor did our Reformers expect that their endeavours should be made an unalterable Standard to all posterity.

They express in their Preface to the Common-Prayer Book their mind this purpose, *viz. That they had done what they could in reforming the Church and the Liturgy, according to their light, and as their times would bear, and that they hoped those that came after would be able to do more, and go further:* This I have heard from divers Ancient and Credible Persons, who remembred they had read this passage in the said Preface, though it be now left out : And it is the more unreasonable to urge the platform of the first Reformation as a Rule not to be altered, though in disputable and mutable things, because some of these Reformers, both Ministers and People of that time disliked some things that were imposed, and because they were yoked with some Papists, who dissembled their Religion that they might better keep their places, and more effectually hinder the Reformation, as Bishop *Cranmer* is said to have complained, How ever the thing was an unquestionable Truth : Nor is it altogether true, which he saith, that the dislike of our Liturgy or Ceremonies was wholly brought from abroad by *Hooper, Rogers, &c.* such as had travelled in *Germany* and *Helvetia*, where *Cranmer* himself had also been a considerable time ; But it sprang up at home also, together with the first seeds of the Reformation. Amongst *Wickliff's* Opinion recited by *Mr. Fox*, and charged on him by his Adversaries, there be many pieces of the present *Non-Conformity*, relating to Discipline and Ceremonies, and *Dr. Fuller* reports that in the latter end of *K. Henry 8th.* many Articles were complained of in the Convocation, as being now common among the People as against *Lent*, most of the Ceremonies and such like. It is natural for Christians not only to desire to hear true Doctrine, and to have true Worship, but to have that Doctrine and worship maintained by such Discipline, and expressed by such Ceremonies or Circumstances as are allowed by it, and agreeable to it, and not by exotick things of mans device, and humour, It is true, then, Conformity and Non-conformity were Twins, conceived and Born together in the Womb of our Church, and it is as true that Non-Conformity put forth its hand first, though Conformity had the hap first to break, and to be Midwived into into the world by Law.

But indeed is it a Reflection on our first Reformers to desire to mend, what they were not peremptory in, and some of them disliked? And is it no dishonour to them to change the Doctrine then established, in chief Articles of Faith, viz. the *Pelagian* and *Arminian* points, which have so long reigned amongst us? And concerning the Divine right of Bishops above Presbyters which they so expressly disavowed, both in their printed books, and in the Manuscript of divers questions decided by them the account whereof we owe to this Learned man? All this therefore from the honour of our Reformers is but a flourish.

But now *Self*. 3. We have three Reasons given why our Reformers left such Ceremonies in the Church.

1. He saith it was out of Reverence to Antiquity, they being of use in the Primitive times, long before Popery, and yet three of the chief Men, *Peter Martyr*, *Martyn Bucer*, *Paulus Fagius*, who were sent from beyond Sea to assist in the Reformation, promoted no such continuance of these venerable Antiquities in the Churches abroad, where they had been made use of before to help to reform: And how Ancient were these Ceremonies? Why? the Surplice he saith was used in *Augustine*, and *Hieroms* time, that was 400 years after Christ, and Superstition came in apace, Images in Churches, and praying for and to the Dead, and such like; And Ceremonies were so many that *Augustine* complained of the condition of the Church in his time in that regard, was worse, then that of the Church under the Law.

The Sacrament he saith was received about Constantines time in a posture of Adoration.

That was standing *Sc.* from the time of *Easter* to *Whitsuntide*, as all other publick Worship was then performed in remembrance of Christs Resurrection. But did they kneel? The Dr. will not say so, nor can he produce any evidence, that kneeling at the Communion was commonly used, till divers Hundred years after Popery had defiled the *Western Church*. *The Cross he saith was much Ancient, and used with much Superstition even in Tertullian's time*; but the Dr. saith not, it was used in Baptism, nor is there any proof of it, and that was only to our case. *When he pleads that we need not reform beyond the example of the Primitive times, viz: those soon after the Apostles, and saith it gives great advantage to the Papists, to reject*

to reject the Customs of those times upon pretence that the Mystery of Iniquity was working even in the Apostles daies. I desire to know where we shall stop, and what Church shall we take for our pattern? Do all, did any, of the Churches for the first 300 years use our Ceremonies in their publick Church Service? or if they did, were not others also used in many Churches, now generally disallowed by Papists and Protestants. As giving the Communion to Infants, sending the Eulogies or consecrated Bread to those that were absent from the Sacrament and the like. Mr. Mead no Non-Conformist, hath proved, that Saints and Image Worship in remoter and smaller degrees, began very early in the Church, amongst which he reckons the most Ancient use of the Cross in Tertullian's time, with which they use to fortifie themselves against the Devil and all evil Accidents.

There were never more Heresies and Divisions in the Church, then in the Primitive times. Yea, before the Apostles were dead, ^{Apost. of the latter times.} there have been no Errours or Corruptions since, but the like were then, and must we not go beyond or pass by all these times, and appeal only to Scripture as the only Rule for Constituting and Governing the Church? Did the Judges or Kings of Judah that reformed their Church before the Captivity, or Zerubbabel and Nehemiah after it, ever make former times their President? Did they not alwaies appeal to the Law of Moses? If we must suppose the times next the Apostles had their Customs, and Ceremonies from the Apostles, because they lived so near them, This opens a door to all Popish Traditions, and overthrows the perfection of the Scripture; Or if we suppose the present Church in every Age hath not as much Power of self-Government as the Primitive Church had, or to appoint and alter their own Customes and Ceremonies, we shall contradict our 20th. Artic. and bring our selves into unsupportable slavery to all the Cannons and Customes of all former times; and so the Christians as well as the Jews will need a Talmud besides their Bible. It is probable our first Reformers, seeing they must retain some Ceremonies, retained those they thought most Ancient, and least offensive, and this was the Reason why they were retained, and not laid aside.

2. The Dr. saith, These Ceremonies were retained for fear of the Popish Bishops, who were some of them Learned Men, least they should reproach the Reformers with innovation against the Primitive as well as the Popish Church.

Ans^r. This was indeed the true and chief reason why our Reformation-

formations was no more compleat because the Popish Bishops that were joynd with the Reformers hindred them, and the Popish People would not endure a through Reformation : Mr. *John Elliot* a worthy Gentleman in the Parliament, *Ann. 3. Car. 1.* said, " That

Ruslw. he had seen in a *Diary* written with *K. Edw. 6th.* own hand, these words. That the Bishops at that time, *Colec. part. 1.* some for Ignorance, some for Sloath, some for Pride and Luxury, and some for Popery, were unfit for *pag. 661.* Discipline : To which we must add, that some of the

good Bishops, Bishop *Ridley* in particular, being but late Converts from Popery, had yet a Zeal for the old Customes and Ceremonies, those that could be retained without manifest Superstition. And so much they themselves acknowledge in the Preface to the Service Book before cited ; Now what Obligation is this upon us, not to endeavour a further Reformation ?

3. He saith, They had respect to the *Lutheran* Churches, who retained the same and more Ceremonies.

Ans. They might consider that seeing they must retain some of the old Customes, it would be more excusable to retain these, because some other Protestant Churches did retain them : But that they did it in imitation of those Churches there is no ground to believe ; seeing till now our Church was alwaies charged to be too much addicted to *Calvin*, and influenced by him and *Beza*, both in *K. Edw.* and *Queen Eliz.* time. Nor is there any Reason why the *Lutherans* themselves retained so much, many Popish Ceremonies, but because *Luther* being almost wholly intent upon reforming the Doctrine of the Church, neglected matters of Discipline and Ceremonies, which his Followers interpret his judgment ; So hard, is it to make any Progress in any good design, especially in matters of Religion, beyond the first Efforts, when mens first Affections and Zeal are cooled, and the World with carnal self doth afterwards intangle their minds.

It is strange overlasting when the Dr. saith that our first Reformers dyed Martyrs for our Church. They dyed indeed for the Doctrine and Worship of our Church, as it is common to all Churches, and grounded on the Word of God, in opposition to the Idolatry and Superstitions of *Rome*, and particularly that Idol of the Mass. But the disputable things of our Liturgy as to Government Rites and Ceremonies, were never in question then ; nor did they bear any Testimony to them. But some of those Martyrs refused

used Conformity to them themselves, (as was shewed before,) and those who were the chief occasions of retaining that form of Worship, and those Ceremonies, and to pleas whom, the better men consented to them, turned Papists again as *Gardiner* and *Tunstall* by Name, and were the Persecutors of the rest.

C H A P. II.

The Second Argument from the Principles and Practise of the Old Non-Conformists considered ; Their Principles and Practise the same with ours, so far as their circumstances did bear. The Difference of Circumstances betwixt them and us.

TH E *Dr's* Second Argument is taken from the Principles and Practise of the Old Non-Conformists, and largely prosecuted from §. 6 unto 17 shewing, *That they condemned Separation from the Church of England ; did not like of gathering separate Congregations, wrote earnestly against the Separation of the Brownists, and when silenced themselves, pleaded for quiet submission, hoping that others might teach the people better then themselves.*

Ans. An Argument from Authority and Example, especially in a matter of practise as this is, is of great force, though not to convince, yet to induce mens mind to further consideration of what they do, especially when it hath been proved by reason before as far as the nature of the thing will bear, but the *Dr.* having not given any direct argument either in his Sermon or this Book, to prove the Preaching of the Non-Conformists Unlawfull, which was the thing in question, and from which I will not wander, the Judgment of former men is of much less weight when it is brought instead of Scripture and Reason, but we shall examine the force of it, such as it is to remove the prejudice or Calumny that may be Created by it, though it be no argument ; for what if the former Non-Conformists thought it unlawfull to preach, when silenced by Law,
(which

(which yet by the way they generally were not, but by the new impositions of Arch-Bishop *Whitgift*, and the Canons of K. *James* which were not Law,) is it therefore certainly so indeed? what if they thought it unlawfull for them in their circumstances, is it therefore unlawfull for us in our present case; or doth it follow that they would have thought it so, had they lived under the same circumstances? The circumstances of every Generation vary things, and make many actions Lawfull or Unlawfull, expedient or not expedient, prudent or imprudent, and of this none but the persons living, and concerned in them are competent Judges, Spectators can see but the outside of things, Ancestors know nothing of them; only they whose business and duty it is to consider what they ought to do in the present case, are able throughly to judge what is meet for them to do or forbear. But the Old Non-Conformists direct all their Zeal against Separation from the Church of *England*, as it was practised by the *Brownists*, and what hence can be infer'd against the present Non-Conformists Preaching the Reader must judge. For the further clearing of this matter, I will briefly consider what were the general and avowed Principles of the old Non-Conformists in Ecclesiastical Matters, what was their practise, and what is peculiar in the present case beyond theirs.

I. For their Principles,

1. The Old Non-Conformists generally held the National Constitution of the Church of *England*, as it is Collected into one body under the Bishops, as the general Heads and Spiritual Officers of it to be unlawfull. yea Antichristian, injurious to the several Congregations or Parishes, and contrary to the King's unquestionable Supremacy. The *Dr.* Confesseth this of those that

Part 1 Sect. 7. presented the Admonition to the Parliament 1570, viz. That they condemned the Government of Bishops, as *Antichristian*, and that they disliked the Ministry of the Church of *England* as ordained by, and derived from the Bishops.

Now this Admonition was written by Mr. *Cartwright*, in the name and by the consent of most Non-conformists then living. Doctor

Fuller saith, that the Non-conformists in the latter end of Queen *Elizabeth*, had a kind of Synod met in *Coventry*, *Ann. 588*, agreed upon divers things, as Canons, some whereof were, That Christ had

appointed no Ministers in his Church but Presbyters and Deacons, that the Bishops pretending themselves to be neither Presbyters nor

Deacons

Deacons, but Officers distinct from them both, were no Ministers of Christ, nor to be acknowledged as such in his Church, and that none ought to receive Ordination from them, because they Ordained not as Presbyters, but as Bishops, i. e. by a power not derived from Christ. This and much more he took from Bishop Bancroft.

Dr. Ames the supposed Author of the English Puritanism delivers this, for the Judgment of the Puritans in those dayes; They hold that there are not by any divine institution in the word any ordinary National Provincial or Diocesan Pastours, or Ministers under which the Pastours of particular Congregations are to be subject as Inferiour Officers; and that if there were any such, that then the word of God would have set them down more distinctly, and precisely then any of the rest, for the higher place that one Occupies in the Church, of the more necessity he is to the Church, the more carefully would Christ the head of the Church have been in pointing him out, and distinguishing him from other, &c.

The same thing Dr. Ames layes down and proves as his own Judgment.

There is a Treatise written in the Name of all the Non-conformists, directed to King James, called a Protestation of the King's Supremacy, wherein they say pos. 27. We hold that these Ecclesiastical persons that make claim to greater power and authority than this, (i. e. in particular Congregations as in the former position) especially they that make claim jure Divino of power and Jurisdiction to meddle with other Churches then that one Congregation of which they are or ought to be members, do usurp upon the Supremacy of the Civil Magistrate, who alone hath and ought to have (as we hold and maintain) a power over the several Congregations in his Dominions, and who alone ought by his Authority, not only to prescribe Common Lawes and Canons of Uniformity, and consent in Religion, and worship of God, unto them all, but also to punish the offences of the several Congregations, that they shall commit against the Lawes of God, the Policy of this Realm, and the Ecclesiastical Constitutions Enacted by his Authority, and pos. 28. We hold that the King ought not to give this Authority away, or to commit it to any Ecclesiastical person or persons whatsoever, but ought himself to be as it were Arch-Bishop and general Over-seer of all the Churches within his Dominions, and ought to im-

Dang. posit. Book 3. cap. 6.

Eng. Purit. chap. 3. pag. 2.

Medul. Theol. cap. 32. de Eccl. instit. item 35.

ploy under him his honourable Council, his Judges, Lieutenants, &c. and Pof. 32. They crave that the Bishops may not be their Judges who were their professed enemies, and tell the King that, *So long as it shall please the King and Civil State to maintain in this Kingdom the State Hierarchy, or Prelacy, we can (in honour to his Majesty and the State, and in desire of peace) be content without envy to suffer them to enjoy their State and Dignity, and to live as brethren amongst those Ministers that shall acknowledge spiritual homage unto their spiritual Lordships, paying unto them all temporal duties of Tenths and such like, yea and joyning with them in the service and worship of God, so far as we may do it without our own particular communicating with them in those humane Traditions and Rites that in our Consciences we judge to be unlawful.* Thus we see it was only for respect to the State, and for peace sake, that they could give the Bishops any acknowledgment or reverence, and that though they did acknowledge other Ministers, for their brethren who did in Conscience ascribe spiritual Authority to the Bishops, yet they did acknowledge the Bishops as such, neither for Fathers nor brethren.

Mr. Robert Parker wrote in *Latine de Ecclesiastica politia*, wherein he proves Presbyters to be the only Ministers, and answereth Mr. Hooker and Bishop Bilson, where they maintain or excuse Bishops, or a power of imposing what government the Magistrate pleaseth upon the Church.

2. They hold Congregations or Churches severally to be the only Gospel Churches, and each one to have full power and jurisdiction within it self, without being subject to any Ecclesiastical Officers but their own; but all to be immediately subject to the Civil Magistrate, and his inspection.

This is the Scope of Mr. Baine's Diocesan Tryal, of Dr. Ames in his *Medul. Theol. Cap. 32. Part. 1.* And thus they jointly

declare, they hold that the Pastors of Particular
Engl. puritan: Congregations are, or ought to be the highest Spiritual
Chap. 3. part. Officers in the Church, over whom (by any Divine Ordinance,) there is no Superiour Pastour, but
 1. only Jesus Christ. And that they are led by the Spi-

rit of Antichrist that Arrogate or take upon themselves to be Pastours of Pastours; and to the same purpose position 2. beforecited, And Position 3. They hold that if there were a Supream, National or Ecclesiastical Minister or Pastour, that should be the Prince of Many thousand Pastors, that then also Christ (as he did in the Jewish Church) would

would have appointed a solemn National or Provincial *Liturgy* or worship, unto which at sometimes of the year, the whole body of the people should ascend, and that unto the Metropolitan City, as unto Jerusalem, and that he would (as he did in the Jewish Church) more precisely and particularly have set down the manner of solemnization thereof then of his Parochial worship. For as much therefore as they cannot read in the new Testament of any higher or more solemn worship, then of that which is to be performed in a particular Congregation, *they cannot be persuaded that God hath appointed any higher Ministers of his service and worship under the new Testament, then the Elect Ministers of Particular Congregations*; See Position 4th, more to the same purpose. And Protestation Position 24th, *We confine and bound all Ecclesiastical power within the limits only of one particular Congregation, holding that the greatest Ecclesiastical power ought not to stretch beyond the same, and that it is an arrogating of Princely Supremacy, for any Ecclesiastical person or persons whatsoever, to take upon themselves Ecclesiastical jurisdiction over many Churches, much more over whole Kingdoms and Provinces of Christians.*

3. They held that the Officers of every Church or Congregation, were Pastors, teachers, and Elders, chosen out of the people, and herein they agreed with all the Protestant Churches besides the Lutherans; *They hold that by Gods Ordinance there should be in every Church a Doctor whose special Office should be to instruct by way of Catechizing the ignorant of the Congregation (and that particularly) in the main grounds and principles of Religion, Chap. 4. Position 1. They held That by Gods Ordinance the Congregation should make choice of other officers as Assistants unto the Ministers in the spiritual Regiment of the Congregation who are by Office joynly with the Ministers of the word, to be as Monitors and Overseers of the Manners and Conversation of all the Congregation, and one of another, that so every one may be more wary of their waies, and that the Pastours and Doctors may better attend prayer and doctrine, and by their means, may be made better acquainted with the state of the people, when other eyes besides their own shall wake, and watch over them* Engl. Purit. ch. 3. p. 13. Protestation Position 25. *We hold it utterly unlawful for any one Minister to take upon himself, or accept of a sole Ecclesiastical jurisdiction over so much as one Congregation, and therefore we hold that some of the sufficientest and most honest and godly men in the Congregation ought to be chosen by the heads of families*

milies to be adjoynd in Commission as assistants to the Minister in the spiritual Regiment of the Souls of that Congregation of which he is the Pastor.

4. They hold that every Church hath power to Eleſt her own Officers, & to cenſure or depoſe them as they ſhal deſerve, and that this power ought not to be taken from them, though they grant alſo that the King or Supream Magiſtrate hath Authority to Command, and by Civil Mulds to compel them to make due Eleſtions, to amend undue ones, and ſo to cauſe them to reſtore ſuch
Engl. Purit. ch. 2. pag. 5. Officers, as may be unjuſtly reſected by them, &c. *They hold that every eſtabliſhed Church ought* (as a ſpecial Prerogative by which ſhe is endowed by Chriſt) *to have power and liberty to eleſt and chuſe their own ſpiritual and Eccleſiaſtical Officers, and that it is a greater wrong to have any forced upon them againſt their wills, then if they ſhould force upon them wives, and upon women husbands againſt their will and liking.*

And Poſition 6. They hold that if in this choice any particular Churches ſhall erre, that none upon earth but the Civil Magiſtrate hath power to controule or correct them for it, and that though it be not lawful for him to take away this power from them, yet when they or any of them ſhall apparently abuſe the ſame, he ſtands bound by the Law of God, and by vertue of his Office (grounded upon the ſame) to puniſh them ſeverly for it, and to force them under civil mulſts to make better choice, Proteſt. poſ. 26. *We hold that theſe Eccleſiaſtical Officers being ſo choſen by the Church or congregation are to exerciſe over the ſaid congregation only a ſpiritual juriſdiction and power &c.* Then they ſhew the manner of proceeding in cenſuring private Members when they offend, and then adde, *If any one of the Eccleſiaſtical Officers themſelves ſhall ſin, he is ſubject to the cenſures of the reſt, as any other member of the Congregation, if they ſhall all ſin ſcandalouſly either in the execution of their Office, or in any other ordinary manner, then the Congregation, that choſe them freely, hath as free power to depoſe them, and to place others in their room, if the Congregation ſhall erre either in chooſing or depoſing of her ſpiritual Officers, then hath the Civil Magiſtrate alone power and authority to puniſh them for their fault, to compel them to better choice, or to defend againſt them thoſe officers that without juſt cauſes they ſhall depoſe or deprive, The ſame Doctrine is defended by Dr. Ames Medul. Theol p. 1. cap. 35.*

5. They hold that inſufficient Miniſters obruded upon Churches, were not to be acknowledged for Miniſters, and if their law-
 ful

ful Ministers were without just cause ejected by any Superiour Powers, they did still retain the Right Engl. *purit* and Honour of being their Pastors. *ch. 2. p. 8.* They hold that the Congregation having once made choice of their Spiritual Officers unto whom they commit the Regiment of their Souls, they ought not (without just cause, and that which is apparently warrantable by the word of God) to discharge, deprive, or depose them, but ought to live in all Canonical Obedience and Subjection unto them, agreeable unto the word of God, and if by permission of the civil Magistrate, they shall by other Ecclesiastical Officers be suspended, or deprived for any cause in their apprehension, good and justifiable by the word of God, then they hold it the bounden duty of the Congregation to be continual Suppliants to God, and humble Suitors unto Civil Authority for the restauration of them unto their Administrations, which if it cannot be obtained, yet this much honour they are to give unto them, as to acknowledge them unto the Death their Spiritual Guides and Governours, though they be rigorously deprived of their Ministry and Service. And Chap. 3. pos. 9. They hold that the People of God ought not to acknowledge any such for their Pastors, as are not able by Preaching, to interpret and apply the word of God unto them, and therefore that no ignorant, and Sole-reading Priests are to be reputed the Ministers of Jesus Christ, who sendeth none into his Ministry and Service, but such as he adorneth in some Measure with Spiritual gifts, and they cannot be perswaded that the faculty of reading in ones Mother Tongue the Scriptures, &c. which any ordinary Turk, or Infidel hath, can be called in any Congruity of Speech, a Ministerial gift of Christ.

And posit. 12. They hold that it is as great an injury to force a Congregation or Church to maintain as their Pastor, with Tythes and such like Donations, that Person that either is not able to instruct them, or that refuseth in his own Person ordinarily to do it, as to force a man to maintain one for his wife, that either is not a Woman, or that refuseth in her own person to do the duties of a Wife unto him.

6. They hold that the Holy Scriptures are a perfect Rule of Doctrine Worship, Discipline and Ceremonies, and that to add new Ceremonies of mens own invention, was a breach of the second Commandment: With this Mr. Parker begins his Book of Ecclesiastical polity, that we are to deduce from Scripture all that concerns the Church of Christ. Thus the Protestation, *We deny no*

Protest. Authority to the King in matters Ecclesiastical, but only that which Christ Jesus the only head of the Church hath directly and precisely appropriated unto himself, and hath denied to communicate to any other Creature or Creatures in the world, for we hold that Christ alone is the Doctor of the Church in matters of Religion, and that the word of Christ which he hath given unto his Church, is of absolute perfection, containing in it all parts of the true Religion, both for substance and Ceremony, and a perfect Direction in all Ecclesiastical matters whatsoever, unto, and from which it is not lawful for any Man or Angel to add, or detract.

Thus Mr. Bradshaw in his Addition to the 12th Argument against Ceremonies, argues, 'All Inventions and Devises of man grounded only upon the will of man, and not upon any necessity of Nature or Civility set apart to Gods outward Worship, are contrary to the second Commandment: These Ceremonies are such. Ergo, See more in the place.

7. They held Ceremonies enjoyned by our Liturgy unlawful. The Cross in Baptism was condemned by all, Mr. Parker, and Mr. Bradshaw in particular, wrote against it. The Surplice was rejected by most. Kneeling at the Lords Supper was disliked by all, but yet thought Tolerable, and that it might be submitted unto by some of the most Learned. The Protestours declare themselves thus,

Protest. 'We refuse Obedience only to such Canons as require the performance of such Acts and Rites of Religion as are rejected and abandoned of all other Reformed Churches as Superstitious disorders, such as are special Mysteries of the Romish Antichristian Idolatry, such as have been controverted in the Church, ever since the last breaking forth of the Light of the Gospel, out of the Cloud of Popery in Luthers time; such as all Protestant writers, and defenders of our Faith beyond the Seas, and most of our own Countrey-men have either in general or particular condemned as vain, idle, and unprofitable; such as all the faithful and painful Pastors of this Realm, and in a manner all States and Degrees of the same would be content were removed, and swept out of the Church, and for which few or none are zealous, but the Prelates and their Adherents. Mr. Bradshaw wrote Twelve Arguments against the Ceremonies, with as much vehemency as any have done since.

12 Gen. Arg. Arg. 1. 'Tis Will Worship, therefore sinful.
against Cerem. Arg. 2. 'Tis a sinful Compliance with the Papists

in derogation from the honour of the Reformed Churches to use them.

Arg. 5. 'Tis Schismatical maintaining differences at home and abroad, when the Authors acknowledge the things imposed indifferent, and that they might without sin or inconvenience be let alone.

Arg. 6. That it is Communicating with the Papists in Idolatrous and Superstitious worship, especially those Papists that live amongst us, and see how much we symbolize with them.

Arg. 9. Because these Ceremonies are Sacraments of humane institution.

Arg. 10. Because they that use them do thereby acknowledge homage to an usurped authority in the Church.

Arg. 12. Because they are the occasion of the damnation of great numbers, *viz.* the Papists who are hardened by them, and ignorant Protestants who place all their Religion in them; and because the usual excuse for these and all other humane impositions (which the Dr. also makes frequent use of) is, that they are not imposed as things necessary to Salvation, but as matters of Order, Decency and the like.

Mr. Bradshaw draws his Eleventh Argument from hence, That the Ceremonies are therefore unlawfull, because made necessary to Salvation, which he proves, because they are imposed with greater Sanctions, looked after with greater Vigilance, and the neglect of them punished with greater Penalties then many things necessary to Salvation are, and in all respects they are made equall with the most necessary things, the greatest rewards being given, and promised to the obedient, even Heaven it self, and the greatest punishments inflicted and threatned against the disobedient, Hell it self not left out of the number. It was said by one, that they do not punish the neglect of Ceremonies *B. of Worcest.* so heavily for the weight of the things themselves, *Letter against* but for the breach of order, and the contempt of *Baxter.* the Church, in such disobedience.

Ans. Thus God himself punishing for the neglect or breach of any of his Positive Commands, doth not punish for the weight or moment of the thing, for he declares he values not Sacrifices, nor Offerings, but for Disobedience to, and contempt of his Infinite Majesty, and yet as he hath power to impose what he pleaseth on his Creatures; so he hath that Infinite Wisdom, and Goodness in
his

his Nature, that inclines him to impose nothing but for good reasons, and the Creatures good; what power then will the Church arrogate to her self? Besides by this argument all offences against the State may be made Capital, because they condemn the Magistrates Authority, as well as all Offences in the Church, are or may be by this Doctrine made punishable with Excommunication, which depriving men of the ordinary means of Salvation doth what in them lies, cast them to Hell. Nor can it be conceived by impartial men, that any Governours of the Church should make those things necessary, and constant terms of their Communion from age to age, which they do in their Conscience judge altogether indifferent, and of no necessity to Salvation.

8. The Non-Conformists desired that they might be excused from the Lyturgy and Government of the Church of *England*, that they might have leave to Govern their own Churches according to that platform of Discipline that they should draw up, and present to the King, and that they might not be compelled to Communicate with other Parishes in things they were not satisfied in, though they could

own them for their Brethren, who practised those things which they could not; *All that we crave of his Majesty and the State is, that by his and there permission, and under their protection and approbation it may be Lawfull for us to serve and worship God in all things according to his revealed will, and the manner of all other Reformed Protestant Churches that have made separation from Rome, that we may not be forced against our Consciences to stain and pollute the simple and sincere Worship of God prescribed in his Word with any humane Traditions and Rites whatsoever, but that in Divine Worship we may be actors only of those things that may for matter or manner either in general or special be concluded out of the word of God, also to this end, that it may be Lawfull for us to exhibit unto them, and unto their Censure, a true and sincere confession of our Faith, containing the main grounds of our Religion, unto which all other Doctrines are to be Consonant, as also a form of Divine Worship and Ecclesiastical Government in like manner warranted by the word, and to be observed of us all, under any Civil Punishment, that it shall please the said Majesty and State to inflict, under whose authority alone we desire to exercise the same, and unto whose punishment alone we desire to be subject, if we shall offend against any of these Laws and Canons that themselves shall approve in manner aforesaid, and our desire is not to Worship God in Dark Corners, but*

in ſuch publick places, and at ſuch convenient times as it ſhall pleaſe them to aſſign to the intent that they and their Officers, may the better take notice of our offences (if any ſhall be committed in our Congregati- ons and aſſemblies,) that they may puniſh the ſame accordingly. And we deſire we may be ſubject to no other Spiritual Lords but unto Chriſt, nor unto any other Temporal Lords, but unto themſelves, whom alone in this earth we deſire to make our Judges, and Supream Governours, and overſeers, in all cauſes Eccleſiaſtical whatſoever, renouncing as Antichriſtian all ſuch Eccleſiaſtical powers, as arrogate and aſſume unto them- ſelves under any pretence of the Law of God or man, the ſaid power which we acknowledge only to be due to the Civil Magiſtrate, And Poſ. 32. — We crave in all dutiful manner that which the very Law of nature yields unto us, that for as much as they are moſt malicious enemies unto us, and do apparently thiſt either after our blood, or ſhipwrack of our faith and Conſciences, that they may not henceforth be our Judges in theſe cauſes, but that we may both of us ſtand as parties, at the barre of the Civil Magiſtrate, to be tryed in thoſe differences that are between us, and that when they ſhall Publickly malign, or ſlander us, or our cauſe, it may be lawful for us in a dutiful ſober peaceable and modeſt manner without perſonal reproach or diſgrace, in a publick manner to juſtifie our ſelves, and then in ſtead of that ſilly mock ſervice to the King of wearing a linen rag upon our backs, or making a Chriſtleſſ croſſ upon a babies face, we ſhall be ready to perform and yield triple homage, ſervice and tribute unto him, and ſhall think our lives and all that we have too vile to ſpend in the ſervice of him, and the civil State under him.

Thus much for their principles.

From all which we may fairly infer, 1. That the old Non-Conformiſts generally did not only allow of Separation from the Church of England in its National Conſtitution, under Arch-Biſhops, and their Officers as lawful, but they did actually praſiſe and maintain ſuch Separation. Forasmuch as they declared the Hierarchy to be Antichriſtian, derogatory to Chriſts Government over his Church, contrary to the Conſtitution and Nature of the Church under the Goſpel, and alſo thought it inconſiſtent with the Kings neceſſary and immediate Supremacy over all Churches, and upon this account they inſiſted only upon their Pariſh Relations, accounting Pariſhes the only Churches, and the Miniſters of them the only Paſtors.

2. That they did generally live in Non-Communion with the Church of England, as to the Ceremonies, and many parts of the Lyrurgy. This is evident, becauſe they thought the Ceremonies unlawful,

unlawful, and therefore though they continued in their Churches, yet none of them would use the Cross in Baptism, few would wear the Surplice, none would compell the People to kneel at the Communion, and many gave it without kneeling, yea, many would not read the Common-Prayers, others but some pieces of them, contenting themselves either with Lectures without charge of a Parish, or else having those under them that could read to do it for them. All their Care of peace which the Dr. now magnifies after their Death, but was in their life time as little accounted of, as ours at this day, they being alwaies charged with breaking the peace of the Church. I say, all their desire of peace did not oblige them to comply with those things which they thought unlawful, either in themselves, or at least in their time and Circumstances.

3. Infer, That when they were rejected for Non-Conformity, they still reckoned themselves the rightful Pastors of their Congregations, and that their Right or Relation was not taken away, only that they were forcibly kept from the enjoyment of their right, and the discharge of the Duties of their Relation.

And thus much appears from Mr. *Bradshaw's* Letter, cited by the Dr. giving the Reason why they must leave their People, and not Preach to them when deprived, because this were to run upon the Sword of the Civil Magistrate, who would not suffer himself to be so despised, as that they whom he commanded to be silent, should yet publicly preach in contradiction to his Command; there is nothing of fear of Schism in the case, but a prudent yielding to the times, and of two evils choosing the less, *i. e.* to do what good they could privately to their People and Neighbours, as their own words cited do shew, rather than by Preaching publicly to hazzard the bringing an open Persecution upon them-

p. 1. Sec.
Self. 16, 17.

selves, and their people. All that the Dr. hath quoted, let it be considered, it proves no more then this, that they did not think it prudence in their Time, and Circumstances, to Preach publicly when silenced for fear of provoking the Magistrate against them, and giving occasion to those that used to slander them, especially to King *James* as Enemies to the Kings Supremacy; They also modestly added that the word might be Preached as well, yea, perhaps better by others, then by them; though their Parishes seldom found it so. All this was but a prudential Reason, proves no difference betwixt their Principles and. Ours.

Let

Let us next consider their practice, The Dr. tells us, That the Old Non-Conformists thought it unlawful for private Persons to endeavour Reformation of the Church, contrary to the will of the civil Magistrate, this he thinks condemns the practice of the present Non-Conformists. But Bishop *Bancroft* giveth another account of this matter, viz. That it was resolved amongst the Non-Conformists after many years waiting, and when they saw their admonitions to the Parliament 1570 had no effect, that then they should endeavour to reform each one in their own places, yet so as by all means to preserve the peace of the Kingdom, which accordingly they did pursue in their several *Synods*, Classical, Provincial and National, from the year 1572 and forward, having at length composed a Book of Discipline *Ann.* 1583, which was revised by several *Synods*, and at length perfected, and according to it they did order themselves, and frame their Congregations till all was discovered, and stopt by Arch Bishop *hitgift*: let us hear their own words. *Protest. pos. 30.*

'We hold it utterly unlawful for any Christian Churches whatsoever, by any armed force or power against the will of the civil Magistracy, and State under which they live, to erect and set up in publick the true Worship and Service of God, or to beat down or suppress any Superstition or Idolatry that shall be countenanced or maintained by the same, only every man is to look to himself, that he communicate not with the evils of the times, enduring what it shall please the State to inflict, and seeking by all honest and peaceable means all Reformation of publick abuses only at the hands of civil publick persons, and all practises contrary to these, we condemn as Sedition and sinful. Bishop *Bancroft* makes it the design of his whole 3d. Book. to shew that the English Non-conformist did after the example of the *Scots*, endeavour Reformation contrary to, or without the will of the civil Magistrate. By this it is manifest, that the attempts for Reformation which they condemned, were

(1.) Such as were by force and Armes. Do we defend any such? The Gospel was planted, and must be propagated by Preaching the Word, and bearing the Cross.

(2.) Attempts for publick reformation either throughout the Nation, or in other Churches besides their own, or to bring their

practise and way of worship into the publick view contrary to the will of the Magistrate, especially if he were a Christian. And this is all that the example of the Primitive Churches under Heathen Emperours doth prove; for they did keep their Assemblies and Worships in private, and maintain them to the death, against the Laws and will of those Princes, but they did not ordinarily bring them into publick to affront the Magistrates to their faces, yet when they lived under mild Princes, and had a kind of tacite connivance they met publickly, as appears by the question brought to *Alexander Severus* by the *Cooks in Rome*: who laid claim to a publick Hall, which the Christians used for their Worship, and the Mild Emperour assigned it to the Christians saying it was better that any God should be worshipped there, then that it should be a place devoted

Euseb. eccl. hist

Lib. 1. Cap.

1. 2.

Churches or publick places appointed for their Worship.

Tract an 1 Cor.

Ch. 11. ver. 22.

to Excess and Riot, and by degrees the Christians had many Beautifull Churches, which *Dioctlesian* caused to be demolished, and the Christians much bewailed it, yea Mr. *Mead* contends that even from *Nero's* time the Christians had Churches or publick places appointed for their Worship. And Mr. *Nich. Fuller* maintains the same opinion in his *Miscellanies* grounding it on the fore-quoted place of *Eusebius*. They who maintained every Congregation to be a distinct Church, having full power within themselves, and their Ministers to be compleat Pastours must needs allow that every Congregation must have an intrinsick power of reforming and regulating themselves, though it should be managed with all reverence and respect to the Magistrate and publick order. But the Non-Conformists judgment in this will better appear by their practise, under the restraints that were laid upon them by Laws and Canons, in the beginning of *Q. Eliz.* about 5 years Conformity was not pressed, the Liturgy seemed to be put as a bound to extravagant humors, as many Civil Laws be, but not as a Snare to the Conscientious. But when it was perceived that the Non-Conformists encreased in number, and power with the people, subscription to the 39 *Artic.* without any limitation was urged 1562, and many who had been Sufferers and Exiles in *Q. Maries* Days, refused to subscribe, amongst whom was the pious

Mr. *Fox*, as saith Dr. *Fuller*, and from this time

Ball agst. Can.

Mr. *Ball* dates the Miseries of our Church, saying, whilst they walked in peace, God blessed them with

with peace, there was no division, Papists came to our Churches, and were dayly converted to the Truth, but when we came to bite and devour one another, the Papists were hardened, and forbore our Communion, the progress of the Gospel was greatly hindered, and perpetual contentions amongst our selves did presently ensue, now many who did not subscribe were turned out of these places, both in the Church and in the Universities, and those who for special respect to their persons, as Mr. Fox and some others were not turned out, yet were looked on with an evil eye, and accounted Puritans, and from this time saith Dr. Fuller, there was a difference even among the Non-Conformists, Mr. Whittingham and others on the one side, held the Government of the Bishops, and the order of the Ch. Hist. Cent. 15.

Church of England utterly unlawfull, and in no ways to be submitted to, others were more moderate, and thought them tolerable, and Reformation in Ceremonies, and some other things only to be pressed and desired. And if this difference among Non-Conformists be found at this day, it cannot be fairly said, they have forsaken the Principles of the First Non-Conformists, seeing it was among them from the beginning, and that sort of them have encreased all along much beyond the more moderate, through the obstinacy of the Prelats, who in all this space of 130 years since the Lyturgy was first established, have not amended or abated any one material thing to gratifie the Non-Conformists, excepting that of late, that the Lessons, Epistles and Gospels should be read in the New Translation. The Non-Conformists that were turned out made a Separate Congregation in London, Preached and Administred all Sacraments in a Publick Hall about the year 1567.

See. 6. This the Dr. confesseth, and names three Ministers as the chief Authors of it, but saith Beza, being advised with, disliked it, why? as Schismatical? No, but for fear of giving offence to the State, which it was then hoped might have been prevailed with to moderate things; but did the rest of the Non-conformists sit down as lay men, and desert their Ministry? No Bishop Bancroft saith, (Book 3. cap. 1.) that for the first twelve years of her Majesties reign, there were many secret meetings of the Non-conformists that came from beyond the Seas, both in private houses, and also in the fields and woods, and some of those meetings they called Churches; and Mr. Cartwright saith he, in part defended them, saying that Conventicles was too harsh a term for them.

The Ministers, both those that kept their places, as well as those that were ejected, held frequent meetings amongst themselves; all Queen *Elizabeths* Reign, after the Parliament had rejected their admonitions, Bishop *Bancroft* and Dr. *Fuller* says, the first of those meetings that came to their knowledge was at *Walmsworth* in *Surrey*, 1572; and from that time divers others were held at *Cooks-field* in *Essex*, Mr. *Knewstubs* Parsonage, at *London*, in *Northamptonshire*, yea at length there were three or four small Classes formed in most Counties in *England*; there were also a kind of Provincial Synods held at *Oxford*, at the time of the Act, and at *Cambridge* at the Commencement, or at *Sturbridge-fair*, and at *Covenry*, (An. 1588: Likewise National Synods were by them agreed on to be held at *London*, at the time of the sitting of Parliaments; and accordingly Bishop *Bancroft* names one or two that was afterward held by them, Ann. 158; they first composed a book of Discipline, wherein they layed down a platform of Church Government in most things like to that in *Scotland*; and after that book had been revised in their several meetings, and at length perfected and subscribed by them, Bishop *Bancroft* saith, they composed a book of Common Prayer, Administration of the Sacraments, and Government of the Church, which they intended to present to the Parliament, in the 27 year of Queen *Elizabeth*, with the form of an Act prefixt for its Establishment; and a petition to the Queen and Parliament, that it might be made the established *Liturgy* of the Land.

This and much more the Bishop hath set down throughout his third book, which was learnt from the Confessions of Mr. *Snape*, Mr. *Stone*, Mr. *Johnson*, Ministers of *North-hamptonshire*, who were imprisoned, and examined by the High-Commission, and from the Papers of others seized in some of their studies.

In Publick they held solemn meetings of Neighbour Ministers, once in three weeks, which they called Prophefying, wherein some prayed, others preached, or made Divinity Lectures. And Arch-Bishop *Grindal* being commanded by the Queen to disturb them, gave her a fair account of them, and refused to interrupt them, though he incurr'd her displeasure for it, as may be seen in his petition in Dr. *Fuller*, with all the former passages, *ibid*.

Moreover in all their Congregations they used the *Liturgy* according to their own judgements, and omitted the Ceremonies as they thought fit; kneeling at the Sacrament was disused, even at the Temple-Church, in the time of Mr. *Hooker* and Mr. *Traverse*,

as appears by their Petitions annex to *Hookers Eccles. Polity*: Yea kneeling was not strictly enjoined all Queen *Elizabeths* Reign. And Mr. *Chadderton* was blamed by the Bishop of *London* at the *Hamp-ton-Court* Conference. for that in *Emmanuel Coll.* Chappel in *Cambridge*, many did not kneel, what they did in other parts of Church Government may be gueſt by this, that Mr. *Cattwright* enjoined his own Man-Servant, being convict of Fornication, a form of acknowledgment which he gave him in writing, which was charged againſt him in the High Commiſſion-Court. Biſhop *Bancroft* tells of a like inſtance of a man at *North hampton* Convict of the ſame offence, and how he was brought to ſubmiſſion and acknowledgment in the Congregation, and then abſolved by Mr. *Snape*. The Biſhop alſo gives account of their proceedings in their Claſſical Meetings, in their cenſures of their Brethren in the Miniſtry.

When the Canons were made, *Ann.* 1603, which were to thoſe Non-Conformiſts, as the late Act of Uniformity was to us, many were now turn'd out, and all liable to be ſo dealt with, but they that were ejectioned, ſtill accounted themſelves the Paſtors of their Flocks, though they were torn from them, and ſtill viſited them with Letters, and in perſon, Praying, Catechizing, expounding the Scriptures to them in private, ſome were received into Gentlemens Houſes, and Preached publickly in their Chappels, others found favour under Biſhops of other Dioceſſes, and got Livings with them; they joyned together in publick and private Faſts, they adminiſtered the Sacraments privately, they contracted and married many, being reſorted too from far, for the good and grave Counſel they uſe to give at ſuch times, ſome taught Schools, others bred up young men in their houſes for their Miniſtry, Mr. *Bernard Gilpin* in *Yorkſhire* is noted by Dr. *Fuller* for this, that he was wont to have twenty young Scholers at a time in his houſe; when they were to be ordained themſelves, ſome went into *Scotland*, others beyond the Seas, and got Ordination, which was not reſuſed by thoſe Biſhops, and ſome they Ordained amongſt themſelves at home; and as the number of Non-Conformiſts increaſed, by the increaſe of new Impoſitions, and more rigorous Proſecutions under the growing *Arminian* Faction in the Church, in the latter end of King *James*, and under Arch-Biſhop *Lauds* Government: So theſe practiſes of theirs increaſed, and they were bold in them as the neceſſity was greater, and that this was their practiſe, will further appear by the late Act of Uniformity, the *Oxford Act*, and the Act againſt Conventicles, which

which do cautiously in particular provide against all such things for the future, which the Contrivers of them would never have thought on, had not experience taught them that those were the private practises of former Non-Conformists, when cast out of their places.

From all which, (which nothing but Ignorance can contradict it) it appears, that the old Non-Conformists, when silent and ejected by Law or Censures, when forbidden by the magistrate and Bishops, did not yet exercise all Ministerial Acts and Offices, and did not count themselves bound to be content with lay-Communion; they did them indeed in a way which they thought most proper to their Time and Circumstances, and not so publicly as we do now; which is to be ascribed to the difference of time and occasions; which comes next to be considered.

It must therefore be remembered, (having been spoken more largely before,) that for a good part of *Q. Eliz.* Reign, Conformity was not urged with any strictness, only Subscription to the 39 *Artic.* and that too, moderate by the Statute of the 13 *Eliz.*

The first two Successive Arch-Bishops, *Parker* and *Grindal* were mild and moderate men, who governed the Church about 25 years, and such were most of the other Bishops, having been Confessors and fellow-Sufferers with the Non-Conformists in the *Marian* daies: they had also travelled abroad amongst other Churches, and therefore were not so zealous in matters disputable at home, of this we have a notable Testimonie from Mr. *Cranmer*, in his Letter to Mr. *Hooker*, neither of them to the *Non-Conformists*. 'At first the greatest part of the Learned in the Land, were either eagerly affected, or favourably inclined that way, the Books then written, for the most part favoured of the Disciplinary Stile, it founded every where in Pulpits, and in common Phrase of mens Speech, the contrary part began to fear they had taken a wrong course, many which impugned the Discipline, yet so impugned it. not as being the better form of Government; but as not being so convenient for our state, in regard of dangerous innovations like to grow thereby, one man stood in the gap to oppose them, &c. which was Dr. *Whitgift*, the following Brch-Bishop; here was yet no occasion for their Preaching in private, while *Whitgift* was Arch-Bishop. The last 20 years of the Queen. the Non-Conformists were more straitly dealt with, the Lyturgy and Subscription more rigorously imposed, their private associations searched into, yet proceedings

ceedings then were less then the little Finger to the loins, compared to those of our days. The Non-Conformists yet enjoyed their places, at least some places, as Mr. Cartwright who was removed from being Professor in *Cambridge*, yet was suffered quietly to Preach in an Hospital at *Warwick* till his death.

After the making of the Canons 1603 the Non-conformists were turned out of places in greater numbers, but yet these Canons did not reach all, the matter being left to the Bishops hands, some did either connive at the secret omission of subscription, or at the doing of it in their own sence, so that many either kept their old places, or quickly got new ones in other Diocesses. Besides the Non-conformists were then but few in comparison of the other Ministers, and the people much fewer, who had not so much Religion as to make any difference betwixt Ministers, and Preaching, and Discipline, or to distinguish betwixt the good and bad, nor were there yet any footsteps of men going back again towards *Rome*, in Doctrine, Government or Ceremonies; and therefore those Non-conformists might very well judge it was most advantageous to the Gospel for them by quiet and private means to serve their people, then by appearing more publicly to occasion greater contentions; but our case is far different. Till *Whitgifts* time there was hope that the acceptable things in the *Liturgy* and Church Government might have been mended, their greatest defenders judging this their best plea, as the forecited Mr. *Cranmer* in his Letter saith, that the Government of Bishops was not unlawful, and setting up of Elders was not necessary, or as Mr. *Hooker* expresseth it in his Epistle Dedicatory to the Arch-Bishop (which also is the drift of his book) that there was no great harm if things complained of were still continued in the Church, but *Whitgift* and his Successor *Bancroft*, put an end to these hopes by establishing all the things in question by their Canons, and requiring all the Clergy to subscribe to the *Liturgy*, but still the Doctrine and worship was kept pure, and the bounds of our first Reformation maintained as sacred, But Arch-Bishop *Laud* extended Conformity to his new *Arminian* Doctrines, to his new Ceremonies, and to bring all men into such subjection to himself under the name of the Church, that they must neither speak nor do any thing in Religion but what he allowed and appointed, and now was hard to keep the ground which was gotten at the first Reformation. He and his designs were at length defeated, but civil broils hindred the settlement of the Church.

At length when almost all men weary of confusions longed for peace and union, the same *Laudensian Arminian* Faction influenced the State, to establish Conformity in an higher degree then ever, viz. that all Ministers should not only practise, but approve by publick declaration, all that was enjoined in the *Liturgy*, without any considerable amendment, hereupon there is no favour to be shewed to any, no moderation nor no end, all being established by a Law, nor were they content to deprive the Non-conformists of their Churches, but a second Law is added to drive them above five miles from those that were there people, or any Corporation, where people being more civilized, and having more leisure, might be more likely to hear then preach; and a third law also, that they should not exercise any worship of God other then what is prescribed by the *Liturgy* in any private house, or in their own family, in the presence of five other persons, so that the present Non-conformists is this. They are all turn'd out as one man, and that for no reason given, only things devised to be laid on them as snares which the imposers knew they could not submit to. They were in number about 2000. The People also of the same persuasion with them very numerous in the 3 Nations, and in *Scotland* the whole people, there was not so much as leave to Petition for any moderation, nor is there any bound of time put to this Rigour, nor may they be suffered privately, and in Corners to A& as Ministers, and help their People, and in the mean while Popery Arminianism, Atheism, and profaneness break in like a torrent, now whether there is as much reason that the present Non-Conformists should keep as private as the former did, the Reader must judge.

Obj. But the Dr. saith the old Non-Conformists earnestly opposed the *Brownists*.

Ans. And so do many of the present Non-Conformists also the *Brownists* had two dangerous Positions or Principles peculiar to themselves.

(1.) That there was no true Church in *England*, nor indeed in the whole world, but that all Churches in respect of their Doctrine Worship, Ceremonies, Constitution and Order, or some of these were Idolatrous, and Antichristian, and that therefore no man that minded his Salvation ought to continue a member of them, or to hold Communion with them as Churches, though they might Communicate with particular Members, or with the Society as a Company of private men, Praying or otherwise Worshipping God together, provided

provided nothing was then used or done, which they disliked.

(2.) The *Brownists* taught that the people had the whole power of Government of the Church, and that the Ministers, were but the Peoples Deputies in Preaching the Word, Administring the Sacraments, or exercising of Discipline, and must be accountable to them. These Principles destructive of all Churches, the Non-Conformists earnestly opposed, especially the first, *sc.* separation from all the Reformed Churches, as Antichristian. For by preventing of this, they would prevent the other mischiefs; but in maintaining the Churches of *England* to be true Churches, did they the Prelaticall, Nationall Church, in respect of the Established constitution, which themselves had so often called Antichristian?

It is manifest by their Books, and what is forequoted of their opinions, that they meant it of the severall Parishes or Congregations in *England*, that they were true Churches, both in respect of their Constitution, and also in respect of their Doctrine and Worship; and that there was in them no such intolerable corruptions, as that all Christians should fly from them; nevertheless when the Ministers in particular Parishes were more then ordinary defective, and unprofitable, they allowed and encouraged the people to resort to Neighbour Parishes for better means of edification; which Mr. *Hildergham* defends to be Lawful, Lect. upon *John*, Page 227.

All this is the sence of the present Non-Conformists; and I do verily believe there are no more *Brownists* among the present Non-Conformists Ministers, then there were amongst them in those days, for some there were then that went further then the rest in Principles of Separation, and so it is in all times, and all matters of controversy, and what considerable difference is there betwixt their allowing people to go to other Parishes or Gentlemens Chappels, and our allowing them to go to private Meetings, seeing one takes them off from their own Pastor and Church as much as the other? The Dr. saith they still kept the same Liturgy, and so they held Communion with the National Church, nay but many times they did not that; for some, the Old Puritan Preachers used it not in their Parishes or Chappels, others but little of it, others would Baptize without the Cross, give the Sacrament without kneeling, Marry without the Ring, &c. which made people resort to them, who could not have such Liberty at home, and so they varified from, if not omitted the Liturgy of the Church, but can a man be a Member of the National Church of *England* and hold Communion with

it, without being a Member of a particular Parish, and if they be allowed to continue members of their own Parishes, and not to make a Schism, who did in cases of necessity, and *pro tempore* mostly Communicate with Neighbour Parishes, why may not the same be said now, yea it is said and belived by most of the Non-Conformists, that the Parishes are true Churches of Christ, and they do not separate from them, or break off Membership though *pro tempore*, and for the present necessity, they do ordinarily Communicate in private Meetings, where the same Doctrine and Worship is used; only some circumstances and ceremonies omitted, but no contrary or new ones used in their room, or in opposition to those in the Parishes, and thus much for the Old Non-Conformists, from whom I do not conceive those that are now living do considerably differ in judgment or practise, but only as time and circumstances do direct them, only they that are dead are out of the way, and so best spoken of, and they that are living, crossing the humours or interests of their opposites are always ill spoken of.

Obj. 2. The Dr. next objects that we contradict the Principles of the Assembly of Divines, who did disapprove and gave reasons against the toleration desired by the Congregational Brethren, as tending to endless Separation.

Ans. The Toleration desired was, that all men should have liberty to joyn with what Congregation and Pastor they pleased without respect to Parish or place of abode, or any other civil distribution or settlement of men amongst us. Their chief reasons was that Christians being not originally bound to Nations, places, or any other Civil Distribution, but left free to joyn with those Congregations, that they should find most convenient and edifying, and now Episcopal Government in *England* being dissolved and no other set up in its room, the People were again free, and therefore might make what Congregations or Societies they found most for their own edification, see Dr. Owen of *Schism*.

This the Assembly thought not reasonable, that things should be unravelled into their first Principles, and that we should begin to lay the Foundation of Churches again, seeing our Parishes, at least those that have good Ministers, have all things necessary to a Church, and it is most convenient for Christians Living in a Vicinity, and under the same Civil Officers to make the same Congregation for Worship, nor did they think, the former Relation of Parishes to be dissolved by the dissolution of the *Hierarchy*, who were no essenti-

al parts of the Parishes, but general Supervisors, or Visitors over them, of the same mind are the most part of the Non-Conformists still, and all the Congregational men went not that way, some allowing all those Parishes that had good Ministers, and some Christians fit for all acts of Church Communion to be true Churches. Mr. Cotten adds *way of the Churches of New-England*, that it is great presumption to say that the Church of *England* was faulty in its first Constitution, and therefore to be pull'd to pieces, and new-built, seeing all Histories agree that some of the Apostles, or Apostolical men, were the first Planters of the Gospel in *England*, who did certainly constitute the Churches in a right manner. But where is the Consequence to our purpose, that because the Assembly, and we as well as they maintain that the Parishes of *England* are true Churches, and not to be subverted, therefore when Thousands of their Ministers are violently thrust out from them without any cause given, (and if they had been all cast out as it was in *Scotland*, the Argument is the same) and their People left either desolate, or like to be betrayed to Ignorance and Superstition, that it were unlawful for these Ministers to Preach to this People in Temporary Assemblies, or Congregations, till this storm may happily blow over. I find no force in the Argument, but each Reader must judge for himself.

C H A P. III.

An Answer to the 3d. Argument from the Nature and Sinfulness of Separation.

TH E Dr. spends the whole second part of his Book in Examining, as he saith.

Sett. 1. The Principles of the present Separation, and those are of two degrees.

(1.) Of some that hold no Communion with the Church of *England* lawful.

2. Those that hold only occasional Communion with them lawful, but not constant; and then proceeds to argue against Separation from Churches, whose Doctrine and Worship are for substance true,

and good, and to shew many inconveniencies that will arise from such Separation. Now though some of the Drs. Answerers have diverted to more general Questions about the Nature of Church Unity, Terms of Communion, and Causes of Separation, and its several degrees, and so have given him occasion to follow them, yet I judge all this to be wide of our present Question, in the sence and apprehension of most Non-Conformists, for we are not disputing about, much less erecting new Churches. The Question only is, whether it be Schismatical and Unjustifiable for us to Preach and Exercise all Ministerial Acts to the People in our Circumstances, still maintaining all the Peace and Communion we can, hoping in Gods due time this Wound of the Church may be healed. What further Questions any particular Men have about the Constitution of Churches, belongs not to the Cause or Party of the Non-Conformists, whose sence he wrongfully ascribes to Mr. *A*, and Mr. *B*. when they only speak of General Questions about Church Communion, and not our particular Case in hand. All the Arguments therefore, or force of this discourse to our present purpose, lieth in this,

Obj. Separation from Churches granted to be sound in Doctrine and Worship, is sinful, and in its effects very evil, but such Separation he would insinuate, is the Non-Conformists Preaching, therefore sinful.

Ans. In Answer to this we say,

(1.) That the Non-Conformists do disclaim, and are not constrained to own by this their Practice any Principle of Separation.

2. We shall shew wherein the great Evil of Separation lieth. And,

3. That the Dr. hath provided no better Remedy against it, then those whom he opposeth.

1. The Non-Conformists disclaim Separation, for they acknowledge the Parishes of *England* to be true Churches, and the Doctrine and Worship established by Law amongst them to be true and sound; they acknowledge themselves Members of those *Parishes*, though wrongfully thrust out, and evilly intreated by them. They did not Separate themselves, nor withdraw from them, but first the Ministers were cast out by new devised terms imposed on them, and afterwards many of the People were excommunicated (and more would have been, could the Parish Ministers have had their wills) for non-communicating in doubtful, if not sinful things.

They

They are also ready and desirous to return to a full union with the Parishes when ever the obstacles shall be removed. And as they own no separation, so their practise doth not constrain them to acknowledge it. They hold Communion with the Parishes, not only in Faith and Doctrine, but also in acts of worship, where they think they can lawfully do it, and when they are not imployed elsewhere. But the Dr. thinks if it be lawful for us to communicate occasionally or sometimes with the Church we are bound to doe it alwayes, his reason is, because if we be members of the Church, and the Church be in such a condition, that we can sometimes communicate with it, then we must do it upon all occasions, or else we separate and become members of a new Church; For Answer, I say, that there are many cases wherein men ought to continue members of a Church, *i. e.* not totally to break off, but wait till abuses may be amended, and breaches healed, and yet it not be their duty to hold constant communion in all or any acts of publick worship; This appears by the instance of the ten Tribes after *Jeroboams* Apostacy, they were still members of the Church of *Jerusalem*, and might not gather any other Church; there were many amongst them who held Communion with *Judah* in Doctrine and Charity, but yet could not go up to *Jerusalem* to all or any of the Feasts or Sacrifices, which were there cheif Publick Worship. And that they sinned not in forbearing, appears, because the eminent Prophets *Elijah*, *Elisha*, and their Schollars, who were so numerous that *Obadiab* alone saved an hundred from *Jezebels* cruelty, and they had four Seminaries, or Colledges wherein they were bred up, these I say lived amongst them, and kept private meetings with them, but neither went themselves, nor required the people to go up to *Jerusalem* as things then stood, *Hosca* blamed the Priests for laying snares and nets upon *Mizpah* and *Tabor*, Chap. 5. 1. 2. to entrap those who out of zeal did go up to *Jerusalem*, and thereby caused them to be put to death. but we do not find that this Prophet, or *Jonas* or *Amos*, who were all sent to the ten Tribes, and preached to them, where they had opportunity, did ever perss them to go up to all acts of Publick worship at *Jerusalem*, because they were Members of that Church.

Again, the people of *Judah*, who lived nearer to the Temple, and had free access to it when it was open, those that were upright whether Priests or private persons, went not up to it in the time of Idolatrous Kings, when the Publick Worship was corrupted, yet they continued members of the Church; they frequented the Synagogues.

or more private meetings at home, *Malac.* 3. 16. and waited sometimes many years, till Publick abuses should be redressed, I know it will be said the case is not the same, Idolatry was here set up in Publick, and so it is not with us.

I Answer, The question is not about the parrelling the case, but the truth of this proposition, that where occasional communion is lawful, constant is necessary, for here we see men continue members of a Church, yea the *Priests* and *Levites* continued officers in it, and the *Prophets* prophesied in it, and so held communion occasionally when they could, and in those things they could lawfully, but they did not communicate in all things, nor at all times, nor were bound to it. But let us go a little farther after the Captivity, the Jews being dispersed through all Countreys, there continued, and set up their Synagogues and house of prayer where ever they could have leave. Those Jews were still members of the Church at *Jerusalem*, and yet did not, could not (the farre greatest part of them) go up thither, They therefore held communion in some things, as the expounding the Law and prayer, but not in the *Passover* or Sacrifices, which were their Sacraments, and the greatest ties of their Society, and all this only for their Civil convenience, because they were seated in other Countries, and by reason of Trade or other occasions were loath to remove to Jewry; if this will excuse them, why may not other Cases arise where one part of a people may not think fit to break off from a Church wholly, and yet not be bound to all acts of Communion or worship with it, and such a case we have frequently in Ecclesiastical history when the people of some great City, as *Rome*, *Antioch*, *Alexandria*, &c. differ'd about choosing a Bishop.

Suppose the better and sounder part chose a fit and worthy Person, and the bigger and worse part chose a Person unsound in Doctrine, or scandalous in Life, and him they will have, thrusting out the fiter Person, and his People also, if they will adhere to him, what should be done in this case. I know it was usual, neither to Pray, nor hear together, though some of them might happen to be in the same Prison, and in the same Room, but this without doubt was schism on both sides. Should the better yield to the worse, and quit their Election. So they should betray Religion and their own Souls; should they quite break off, and forsake the others, resolving never to have more to do with them; So they should betray the others to utter ruine, and the Church by degrees to destruction.

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The good Wheat continually leaving the Tares, among whom yet it is very likely, some good Wheat may be scattered, it remains then that they keep to their Priviledge, and adhere to him whom they have chosen, and yet not dissent them who would cast them out, but communicate with them as Brethren, especially in such common Duties, as do not contain a plain acknowledgment of their undue and Schismatical practise, and so wait till Providence may find means to make up the Breach. That this is our case, shall be shewed in the last Chapter.

The Dr's other reason is grounded from *Phil.* 3. 16. The sum of his arguing from that Text is this ;

Men are to do all things Lawfull to maintain the Unity of the Church where they live, therefore whatsoever is Lawfull for them to Communicate in sometimes, they must do it always.

Ans. Lawfull is either simply and absolutely so, or Lawfull in those Circumstances as the Apostle distinguisheth betwixt lawful and expedient, *1 Cor.* 6. 12. *i. e.* lawful in it self, or lawful in this or that case. If every man be bound to do all that is simply and absolutely lawful to preserve the peace of the Church, then he may be many times bound to yield to turbulent and irregular persons in unreasonable demands and impositions, but if a man be bound only to do those things which are lawful in the present Circumstances, then the Argument is of no force, for it will be said, they that held but occasional and partial Communion; go as far as they judge lawful, *i. e.* expedient and fit in their Case and Circumstances, and so they shall not be bound to constant and full Communion.

2. The great sin and mischief of Separation lieth in judging and condemning others as no Churches, having no Ministry, no Sacraments, and so not being in the ordinary way of Salvation, not having Christs presence amongst them.

This indeed deserveth all the aggravations which the Dr. cites out of *Mr. B. Scē.* 24. and I am perswaded he intended no more, and this was the meaning of the Old Non Conformists. Severe reprehensions of the *Brownists*, viz. that they dishonoured Christ, reproached his Servants, his gifts and Graces in them, and slandered the footsteps of his anointed. This indeed tends to the Subversion of the Church, to expose it to the contempt of the world destroys all charity and brotherly Communion, and is a great presumption, for who shall dare to judge when Christ hath forsaken a People, who shall profess his Name, and keep up his Worship for substance according

cording to his word, though they do, or are supposed to fail in Circumstances, or lesser parts of their Duty. And if the Fathers mentioned by the Dr. intended any other Separation by their high invectives against it, as it is probable they did not, (at least those pious, peaceable men, *Cyprian* and *Augustine*) when they said Schism is as bad as Idolatry, &c. we may say by their leave, that they shew'd more zeal for themselves and their own Interest, then for the honour of Christ, and the peace of his Church. Mr. *Hales* (tract of Schism) saith, Heresie and Schism are the Theological Scare-Crows, wherewith Men fright Children, and men commonly use against all that differ from them, when they cannot prove such a Crime against them, and again he saith the *Donatists* might have been in the right for any thing that *Augustine* said against them; and if he had extended it to *Cyprian* and *Cornelius* writings against the *Novatians*, he might perhaps not have exceeded the Truth. We do acknowledge all Un-necessary Separation from a Church is a sin, let the ground be what it will, the error of Conscience in him, who thinks it a duty will not make it a duty, it doth impair Love, it layeth the Church open to her Enemies reproaches, and to endless contentions within her self, but it is not such a sin as some men labour to make it to maintain their own greatness, as if it would excuse men for the neglect of their Salvation, or make them amends for the loss of Heaven, that they have been scrupulously fearful of running into Schism. Let the Church take care as Mr. *Hales* adviseth, that the Terms of her Communion be no other then the Scripture will justify, and do concern all Christians; and if any other be added, let them be temporary, and removed when inconveniencies arise greater then the Reasons for imposing them, or equal to them. Let the Ministers labour in publick and private with soft words and good Reasons to satisfy the People in all their doubts about things relating to the Church, and if after all this some few (as they will not be many) are so far dissatisfied, as that they think they ought to withdraw, let them withdraw, provided they do not reproach and condemn the Church they depart from, and let them nevertheless be owned as Brethren. This certainly becomes the Gospel, and will make more for the peace of the Church, and send more towards reducing of those that separate, then all corrections and hard words against Schism.

And thus did the Primitive Christians towards the *Novatians*, for though some zealous of their own authority speak sharply against them,

them, yet they were not troubled in *Constantine's* time, the Bishops of theirs sate in the Councel of *Nice*, they had their publick Churches, one in *Constantinople*, when it was the Imperial Seat, to which the people generally resorted when *Macedonius* was Bishop, and when their Church was commanded to be pull'd down, and they not to meet within the City the people assisted in carrying the Materials, and setting up the Church in the Suburbs, yea, saith *Socrates*, the people would have been admitted into their Communion if the *Novatians* had been willing, and we may observe in History, the *Novatians* never ceased till the clamours against them as dangerous and intollerable persons were at end, and little or no notice were taken of them. Indeed could it be proved that any particular Church under the Gospel, whether National Diocesan or Parochial was of the same constitution with the Church of the *Jews*, that all Christians were bound to be Members of it, or all that live within their Precinct, or at least all that once have been Members, are indispenfably bound to continue so, then it were a damning sin to separate from them. But when it is Originally, as free for every Christian to choofe his Church, as to choofe the place of his abode, and nothing but the convenience of his own edification in the first place, and next the edification of the Neighbourhood obligeth him to joyn with, and to continue in this or that particular Church, it can be no sin of so high a nature, though it be blame-worthy for him to withdraw without just reason.

3. Say, that all Separation is as great a sin as our Author would insinuate, what means doth he prescribe to prevent it? why, he saith all men are bound to do, and submit to all things that are lawfull, to preserve the peace, and to prevent the dividing of the Church. True all things that are really Lawfull, but not to all that the imposers say are lawfull, if men must judge for themselves, what is Lawfull absolutely and what not, and what is Lawfull or not in their circumstances, will not this open a doör for Separation, as much as any thing his opposites have said, he blames them for allowing people to separate upon pretence of their Ministers insufficiency or scandal, or interruption on them against their wills, for doubtfull ceremonies for modes of Worship, for want of Discipline or right Constitution of the Church, and saith (which is his most plausible arguments,) that some of these, the Papists might have retorted upon our first Reformers, and all such pretences would justifie the Ancient Schismes, and make way to endless Sepa-

ration for the future. But he wrongs these Authors, which is a common shift, almost to all that write on this subject, when he intimates that they allow Separation upon any pretence of such causes. Is there no difference betwixt pretending and really proving the gross insufficiency, errors or scandals of a Minister, or gross usurpations over mens Consciences and Liberty? do any prudent men allow Separation without good cause, full proof, all endeavours of amendment, patient waiting, and mature advice, and consideration of all circumstances? what then, is there no preventing endless Separation, but Tyranny over mens Consciences, that they shall be compell'd to approve, and do whatsoever their Rulers please as the Papists teach? yes, the Dr's final determination is *Page 208. A prudent and due submission in Lawfull things is a medium betwixt Tyranny over Mens Consciences, and endless Separation*, what is here more then any Brownist will grant that understands himself, viz. that as Rulers must not Tyrannize over Mens Consciences, so the people must not be given to endless Separation, and that the way to prevent both is, that the Rulers rule with due and prudent Discipline, and that the people yield prudent and due submission, and that this Government and submission be exercised only in Lawfull things. But still must not the people in submitting as well as the Governours in Ruling, judge whether things be Lawfull or not? whether submission be due, and how farr, and in what cases it is prudent to yield, or to deny it? if the people must not judge, then you establish a Tyranny over their Consciences, that they must approve what ever their Rulers command, or *Hobbisme* that they must do what ever their Rulers command, though they beleive it to be sinfull or inconvenient, if the people must judge for themselves in the things that concern them, then they must judge of the insufficiency of their Minister, the Legality of his call, and the like? but how then hath the Dr. put a stop to Separation more then they? may not men pretend things required to be unlawfull, submission not to be due nor prudent, and so without end? Their Arguments therefore are but Sophismes, like those that plead against all certainty of sense or reason, because many men are certain, i. e. confident when they are mistaken, that a man cannot be sure he seeth, heareth or feeleth, because he hath many times thought he did so in his dream, when it was no such thing, as there is a certain way of proving, that men are awake and use their senses, so there is as certain a way to prove by plain Scripture, when Ministers are insufficient,

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when impositions are unlawfull, when it is necessary to withstand usurpation on the Churches Priviledges, &c. what ever Sophisters will cavil against it, and if men will pretend cause of Separation when there is none or manifestly insufficient, or but dubious, they may be convicted, and if they separate, bear their blame: but whilst men are subject to mistake, to passion and partiality, which will be till our Lord come, what shall put a stop to Separation but necessary moderation in Rulers in imposing? one reverence in the people in submitting, and meekness towards those, who notwithstanding all care, weakly or peevishly may dissent in things that are tolerable? This Learned man hath not shewed us, nor the experience of Fifteen Hundred Years, the Popish Cruelty could not prevent Separations, Episcopal Authority could not prevent them. The *Danatists* and *Novatians* had their Bishops, imposing Uniformity in Ceremonies could not, the First Division in the Christian Church rose about the keeping of *Easter-day*, if people offend against the plain Rule of Scripture, or the plain Rule of good Government and Order, let them be punished according to their Offences, but not for things doubtfull in Scripture, or burthensome in Government, if men offend in lesser matters, and cannot be convinced, let them be born with till inconvenience be seen to arise from such Clemency, and then it is time enough to retract or retrench it; if this were not dayly done in Nations and Families, no Civil Society could stand, how then shall the contrary severity establish the Church.

Obj. The Dr. objects, the Reformers taught, that where there is soundness in Doctrine and Worship people ought not to separate from a Church for lesser defects, real or apparent, and that they insisted on the corruption of Doctrine and Worship, as the only cause of their Separation from *Rome*.

Ans. 1. Doctrine and Worship are indeed the chief things in a Church, for if God be truly worshipped and his knowledge be truly taught, mens lives will be bettered, and their Souls saved by it, but then it must not lye dead in the Confession of Faith, and in the Lyurgy, while men preach false Doctrine, and bring Superstitions into the publick worship, or else neither Preach nor Worship God in the Congregation at all, or so seldom that the people can be little profited by them, the Reformers never thought of this mystery.

2. It is not true that they separated from *Rome* only, for the

Corruptions of Doctrine and Worship, it was for such Corruptions that they counted her Antichristian a Rotten and Apostate Church, with whom they might have no Church Communion, but her usurpation and Tyranny over all other Churches was used also as an argument for our withdrawing from her, for if the Church of *Rome* have no Authority over all, or any other Churches, and if the exercise of such power be an insufferable oppression, and prejudice to the Churches, then they might justly upon this account cast off her Yoak, though for this alone they should not reject Communion with her as a Neighbour Church. Dr. *Hammond* Dr. *Bramhal* and others of late insist upon this as the chief defence of our departure from *Rome*, viz. because the Church of *England* was for the first 600 years independent on her never Subject to her, but Dr. *Reynolds* conference with *Hart*, and all other of the Reformers who wrote against the Popes Supremacy, made this one Argument to justify their secession, and so it will be in lesser cases, even a just ground of departure from constant Communion, though not a ground of refusing Brotherly and occasional Communion, unless there be corruptions in Doctrines and Worship allowed also.

3. The first Reformers generally, except *Calvin*, were too negligent both of Worship and Discipline, being wholly intent upon reforming the Doctrine of the Church, gross Idolatry indeed in Worshiping the Mass, Saints and Angels they did quickly espy, but Images in Churches with other Superstitions, Rites and Ceremonies they took little notice of, to cause them to be reformed, and hence the *Lutherans* to this day retain them, as if they were approved of by *Luther* and his Companions: perhaps they waited that the Princes should reform these things, or it may be they thought if they could have liberty to Preach sound Doctrine, that would of it self purge out these disorders in worship and ceremonies, they also might think the people, and especially the Princes would yet scarce bear strict Discipline, but in time might be brought to it, but they found they were mistaken, and some of them saw their error while they lived, *Bucer Oelochampadius* and others complained as *Comenius* hath cited them in his Exhortation, that they had not set up Discipline at first, for now the people had got Knowledge and Notions, and were used to Liberty, they would not bear the Yoak of Discipline, *Bucer* with Tears said to some *Bohemians* when he had read their Confession and former Discipline, *vos soli habetis regnum Christi in terris*, none but you have the Kingdom

dom of Christ on Earth. In like manner do the best *Helvetians* and *Germans* complain in every Age of want of Discipline and Power in their Churches.

Obj. But we must not separate for Ceremonies, and for this the Synod of *Sendomer* in *Poland* is quoted.

Ans. That same Synod also declares that Ceremonies ought not to be imposed, and when they had recommended kneeling at the Sacrament to their People, to distinguish them from the *Socinians* that lived amongst them, they add that they would not enjoin it, for if they should, then they might be necessitated to use the Ecclesiastical Censures against those who would not submit, which ought not to be used for Rites and Ceremonies. *Vid. Consens. Eccl. Polon in Corp. Confes.*

Ceremonies many times pollute the Worship of Christ, and he forbade Israel all the Rites and Customs of the Heathen, as well as their Idols and their Worship, but if the Ceremonies themselves be really inoffensive, yet the usurpation of them that impose them without Authority, may be a greater offence than the Ceremonies imposed, and justly to be resisted, and if they will maintain their Impositions to a division, this breach must be upon them.

Obj. *Amyraldus* is quoted, who saith, Ceremonies are not a ground of Separation from a Church, unless they be such as import false Doctrine, or false Worship, or are likely to introduce it.

Ans. And are not these things objected against the Ceremonies of the Church of *England* even by the Old Non-Conformists, viz.

That the Surplice is a sign or badge of a Mass Priest, that the Cross was a Popish Idol, and the use of it Idolatry, i. e. like the meats offered to Idols, very offensive and scandalous to the weak; that kneeling at the Sacrament was a badge of Adoration of it, and was never imposed, nor generally practised in the Church, till Transubstantiation was established, and for the danger of bringing back Popery by these Ceremonies, the Experience of this and the last Age (since Bishop *Laud* new modelled the Church) is abundant proof. I will only instance in kneeling at the Supper, which turned the Table to an Altar, set it at the East end of the Church, railed it in, made it Sacred, and to be bowed to, and that for this Reason, as the *Auch Bishop* delivered it in his Speech in the Star-Chamber, because there it is *hoc est Corpus meum, this is my body, whereas in the Pulpit it is but hoc est verbum meum, this is my word.* And then Dr. *Heylin* writes a Book to prove that there was some kind of Sacrifice

crifice of Christ in the *Eucharist* which was answered by Dr. *Hackwell*; and now how far were these Men from the Mass.

Obj. *But this will hinder all Union with Protestants, if we should break for Ceremonies and Modes of Worship.*

Ans. He means the *Lutherans*, for whom our *Arminian* Church men have some kindness, but little for other Protestants, yet this will not follow, for a Christian may submit to those Rights and Ceremonies in another Church where he occasionally is, and communicates with them but as Brethren, which he may not do in his own Church, where he is a constant member, and so is guilty of the Corruptions, which according to his place he doth not oppose, even as every prudent man complies with the Orders and Customes of places and Families; he goes in abroad, though he will not suffer the same to be practised in his own house, but alas what hope of Union with Protestant Churches, when we teach, that where there are no *Diocesan* Bishops, there are no Churches, no Ministry, no Sacraments, some of his Majesties Chaplains when they were with him in *Paris*, did hold no Communion with the *French* Churches, as they complained in publick Letters, to say nothing of many at home, that kept their own houses 12 years or more, during the late troubles; going to no Church for want of Bishops, and the Common-Prayer, finally our Act of Uniformity decrees. That no man shall Preach or Administer the Lords Supper, much less have any Ecclesiastical Preferment that is not Episcopally Ordained, besides all other Subscriptions. Now the Communion of Churches lieth in admitting of Ministers to officiate in each others Churches sometimes, as well as in admitting the People to lay-Communion, as in the famous instance of *Victor* and *Polycarpus* at *Rome*, celebrating the Sacrament together, Let us unite at home, and then there may be hope we shall unite with our Neighbours.

C H A P. IV.

The grounds of the Non-Conformists present practises.

THE Dr. spends the whole 3d. part of his Book in confuting the Pleas for Separation from the Church of *England*, and gathering new Churches, which I shall leave to those whom it concerns, and shall only say, that all these disputes do really increase, and not hinder Separation, by laying open the first Principles of Government to the People, and filling their heads with Notions and Disputes about things, whereof they are not competent Judges: Moderation in Governing, and not disputes about Governments doth most dispose the People to Obedience and quiet Submission, and as in Commonwealths, when People have not the Protection of their Governours, or the Benefit of their Laws and just Priviledges, rigorous proceedings dispose them to defection, and to study Arguments to defend it from the natural principles of self-preservation, and the peoples interest in all Government by their Primitive consent to it, and their successive approbation of it: So, rigorous Impositions in the Church, without any condescension in Governours, upon just complaints, will at last make the People weary of forbearing, and search for all pleas, whereby they may defend themselves in shaking off the Yoke; and then it will little avail their Rulers, either to their profit, honour or peace of their Consciences, to cry out upon Rebellion or Schism when they have lost the people: Our present practise in Preaching, though ejected and forbidden, is not grounded on, nor need be supported by these, or any other pleas for Separation; The general sence of the Non-Conformists, both Ministers and People, (leaving to particular Persons their particular sentiments as the Church of *England* also doth to many of her Members,) is this:

1. That the Parishes of *England* generally are true Churches, both as to the matter of them, the People being Christians, and not to be excluded from Church-Communion; and as to the form of them, their Ministers being true Ministers, such as for their Doctrine or manners do not deserve to be degraded.

2. That the Doctrine, Worship and Sacraments in these Parishes are for substance sound and wholesome, though there are some offensive

sensitive things mixed in them, and annexed to them.

3. That they are still Members of these Parishes; the people of those where they live, and the Ministers so far, as not to be obliged to set up distinct and permanent Churches; nevertheless they think themselves bound to joyn together for the Worship of God according to their own Consciences, and publick allowance for some years past; desiring and waiting for an opportunity to return fully to the Parish-Communion, when ever it shall please their Rulers to condescend to their reasonable request, in relaxing or removing those things which are so offensive to them; and in this their practise they judge they do no more then the Primitive Churches often did, when erroneous, or otherwise unfit Pastours were obtruded on them, or other differences arose amongst them, whereupon the Congregations were often divided, as in *Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, and Constantinople*, with divers other places, and then when those offences and differences were removed, they returned to full communion again; or as did the Church of *Israel*, when by *Jeroboams* Apostacy they could not go up to *Jerusalem* with safety, or other times could not communicate there, because of Corruptions under some Kings of *Judah*, who then held private Assemblies for the present necessity, and when all obstacles were removed, again went up to *Jerusalem*, even many of the Ten Tribes in *Hezekiah* and *Josiah's* time, when their own Idolatrous Princes were removed, and they could do it without danger, though they were still subject to Idolatrous Conquerors, but such who lived remote, and gave them more Liberty of Religion then their own Princes did.

We judge our case to be like a case of necessary self defence, where present necessity is the Guide and Law-giver, and ordinary Laws and orders which are proper for times of peace, are in a great measure superseeded. When a Kingdom is invaded, or divided within it self, all things threaten ruine; it is lawful for the people to gather into several Bodies, to possess Garrisons, to chuse them Leaders, and for fit men to undertake their conduct, though without, though contrary to some present commands that may be unduly obtained and given, yet they shall incur no guilt of Sedition nor Rebellion so long, as they design nothing but the preservation of themselves, and the whole as far as they can, and are ready to return to their own places so soon as peace shall give them leave.

When an Army is in danger to be betrayed by the falsehood or division of the principal Officers, or when it hath lost its Generals in
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some defeat, it would not be accounted mutiny for the Soldiers to run together as they can, and with the help of inferior Officers to preserve themselves from being sold or destroyed, provided they still retain a resolution of returning to the Body of the Army, when they may with safety to the whole, and to themselves.

Thus the Non-Conformists lie under such a necessity, they conceive for the Reasons laid down in the former part, *ch. 6.* and *7.* which it may not be amiss for a conclusion briefly to sum up.

1. *There is now no reason to be pretended for the imposed Conformity:* In *K. Edw. dayes*, the Bishops, their Clergy and People made it necessary to retain what was then retained, *now* 'tis not so generally desired. In *Queen Elizabeths* days there was hopes of winning of the Papists by our moderation, *now* there is none, but more danger of their inroaching upon us by it.

2. *The Dissenters from this Conformity were heretofore but few, now they are a very considerable part of the Church;* I will make no comparison. Formerly the Ministers were generally censured as *Puritans*, and were but few, the people likewise but two or three in a great Town, now they are Multitudes, and those who are zealous for Conformity, appear fewer then those, who would be glad to have it reprov'd, at least in all places that are most civilized.

3. Conformity hath occasioned a woful Division and Scandal in our Church ever since the Reformation, and therefore ought not after so much Experience of the evil of it, and also after plain evidence of benefit and advantage to Religion, by the removal of it for some years, to have been again so rigorously enjoyed.

4. *The things in Question, though not of the highest nature in themselves, yet by occasion of the Division they cause at home, and the advantage the Papists make of it have endangered our whole Religion, and will do, so long as they are continued.* The Nation will not forget the alteration of Doctrine, and of the Liturgie, innovations in Worship, and additions of Ceremonies that were brought in by Bishop *Laud*, under the pretence of Uniformity, decency, and opposing the *Puritans*, till matters were brought to that pass, that the Papists wanted nothing to encourage their hopes of swallowing us up, but the prospect of a Popish Successor to the Crown; and his own Chaplains and dependents were not ashamed to profess, that there was a design of Reconciliation with *Rome*; and whether the present growth of Popery and Confidence that the Papists are arrived to, had not its Rise from the Act of Uniformity, its turning out so many

Ministers, and making so great a breach amongst our selves, and whether it be not still fomented chiefly by our division, and under pretence of zeal against Dissenters, let unprejudiced men judge.

5. A great part of the Nation both Ministers and People have engaged themselves and their posterity to the long desired Reformation, and that not without authority, though not with full authority.

6. So great a number of Ministers and Students were cast out by the Act of Uniformity, that cannot but for one age at least, greatly endanger the Church, which must needs be supplied with young ignorant and unlearned persons, or be unprovided, the Universities being not able in many years to furnish out such a number of tolerable Ministers, as were ejected, and the visible effects do confirm this.

7. The Terms of Uniformity are most rigorous and intolerable; for not only all was enjoined, that had been complained of 100 years and upwards, but also others added, so manifestly contrived to insnare and offend those that were concerned, that nothing could be more.

8. There was no hope left either of alteration of this Uniformity, or of relaxation in the execution of it, it being established by Law, and the Bishops made the Overseers of the execution. It was also corroborated by two other subsequent acts, which hindered Ministers from being of any use, yea from living amongst or near their people. And to this against the Ministers was added, that none of the same snares were put upon the people, all that bore office, civil or military, that so there might be no relief for the present, and no hope of redress for the future.

Now should all this be quietly submitted to, there would be no end of imposition on the Church, seeing Rulers might when ever they pleased throw out both their Magistrates and Ministers, and they must all quietly suffer whatever they will impose on them. We may add, there had been as patient forbearance, and as peaceable means for redress, during a 100 years, as ever was in any Church, inasmuch as we are now upbraided with it, but nothing was obtained at last, but adding to their Burthens, and that not without scorn and indignity; and that the blame may not be cast on our Princes, on whom our adversaries injuriously, as well as ungratefully, for the most part cast it, 'tis not to be forgot, what attempts and endeavours his Majesty made at his entrance on his Kingdoms, to moderate and accommodate things in the Church, both
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by his declarations, and granting a Commission to a fit number on both sides, to review the Liturgy, and to endeavour a composure; but the Commissioners for the Church would never vouchsafe a personal conference, and debate with the Non-Conformists about the things they desired to be amended; and the Answers they returned in writing were scarce with common Civility; but once in all their replies, giving them the Title of *Brethren*, and at last yielding to amend nothing considerable.

Upon these accounts the Non-Conformists judge it their duty to help the distressed and oppressed people what they can, whilst they live, praying and waiting that peace and order may at length be restored to these Churches, and verily believing that if these impositions be continued, they will unhinge and divide the people, that scarce any time or means will reduce them to due order, and then even we may be counted honest men when we are dead, and moderate in respect of those that come after.

FINIS.
